

God is Truth
The way to Truth
lies through *Ahimsa*
non-violence,
Sabarmati
[illegible]

M K Gandhi

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

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PREFACE

This volume, covering the period January 21 to June 15, 1927, opens with nostalgic references to Gandhiji's first satyagraha struggle in India ten years earlier: . . . "the whole tour is inspiring. Champaran has sacred memories for me. Champaran really introduced me to India" (p. 4). This is to Mirabehn. On the same day he wrote to the Ashram women: "I find that this year I shall not be able to stay in the Ashram for a long time. I am sorry for this. But we must find happiness even in our misfortune. I must wander about in the interest of khadi. Only thus can I carry the message of khadi to the masses" (p. 6). These talks on khadi had a set purpose and produced a concrete effect; they were "converting into energy" the people's desire for freedom (p. 178).

Touring incessantly through Bihar, C.P. and Berar, Maharashtra and U.P., Gandhiji so overstrained himself that on March 26th his health broke down and he was advised rest on a hill station (Appendix III). Accordingly he stayed in Nandi Hills in Mysore from April 19 to June 5. The illness was the result both of excessive physical strain and of worry about the conditions prevailing in the country. "I let the co-workers think," Gandhiji wrote to a friend, "and thought myself that my constitution would somehow or other stand the pressure that was put upon it, . . . I had intended to turn over a new leaf after finishing the Maharashtra tour and had given due notice to Rajagopalachariar that I would no longer be hurried . . . " (p. 373). The psychological reasons seemed more difficult to control. Writing to Dr. Ansari, Gandhiji explained: "My chief difficulty is how to control the mind and not let it think, unless I develop *dementia* . . . but I do not know how I can prevent the doings of Hindus and Mussalmans from making me think furiously. Nor do I know how to prevent the growing starvation of millions acting upon my mind" (p. 274). However, he accepted the spiritual lesson of the illness with gentle submission, as he had done once before during the prolonged illness from August 1918 to January 1919 (Vol. XV). Writing to Kallenbach, a German co-worker, during the South African struggle, he said: "I am taking the chastisement I hope in due humility and if He raises me from this sick-bed, I am making Him promises that I shall reform my ways and shall seek still more strenuously to know His will and do it" (pp. 314-5).

Gandhiji was passionately eager to continue working, as is evident from the conversations with Doctors Wanless (pp. 194-5) and Jivaraj Mehta (pp. 209-10), but he had cultivated non-attachment in sufficient measure not to cling to life even for the sake of service. In letter after letter written at this time, Gandhiji mentioned the possibility of his end with the utmost serenity of mind. "Anyway I do not expect to go beyond 13th April, 1928. I have nothing new to say or give. I may collect more, give a little more guidance and patch here and patch there. But really the clock has struck for me" ("Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", pp. 195-6). In another letter to the same correspondent, he said: "And then, in spite of all the extraordinary precautions, she [Nature] will one day send her messenger who like a thief in the night will steal in *some day* and unperceived by anybody administer the dose which will send me to long sleep" (p. 403).

Gandhiji's chief preoccupation at this time was khadi and he had left the political programme of the Congress in exclusive charge of the Swaraj Party led by Motilal Nehru. Though the Congress had officially accepted the khadi programme and a new body named the All-India Spinners' Association had been set up to organize khadi work, a large number of Congress members were lukewarm in their support of the programme and were opposed to the khadi franchise adopted at the Gauhati Congress (Vol. XXXII). Gandhiji seems to have been reconciled to this situation. Commenting on a plea to him by the Congress President, Shri S. Srinivasa Iyengar, to relent on the issue of the franchise, he said: "Numerical strength savours of violence when it acts in total disregard of any strongly-felt opinion of a minority. . . . I had therefore no hesitation in telling the President, that he should assist the removal of the clause about khadi if that clause could not gain willing submission from the minority" (p. 458). He added, however, that he must be allowed to retain his opinion about the clause, though that opinion should have no greater weight than the opinion of any other member of the Congress.

Mr. Saklatvala met Gandhiji at Yeotmal on February 5, and in the following month invited him in an open letter (Appendix I) to join the Communists in organizing workers and peasants and also to cease playing the Mahatma. While giving due credit to Mr. Saklatvala's patriotism and love of humanity, Gandhiji preferred to persist in his "error" which he did not recognize as such but hugged rather as his shield and solace. "I do not regard capital to be the enemy of labour. I hold their co-ordination to be perfectly possible" (p. 167). In an interview to *The Bombay*

Chronicle, Gandhiji elaborated the point further: "I want real co-operation between labour and capital. . . . As in the political so in the labour movement, I rely upon internal reform, i.e., self-purification. . . . labourers must evolve strength from within. Then capital will become a real servant of labour" (p. 189). The cult of bigness appealed to Gandhiji no more than the cult of conflict did. Supporting Ahmedabad labour's attitude of aloofness from any All-India organization, Gandhiji explained his labour policy: "The idea is to take from capital labour's due share and no more . . . by educating labour to evolve its own leadership . . . Its direct aim is internal reform and evolution of internal strength. . . . Labour . . . must not become a pawn in the hands of politicians. . ." (p. 302). When Gandhiji talked of labour taking its "due share" from capital, he certainly did not approve of "the criminal disparity that exists between the condition of labour and that of capital" (p. 271) or the "terrible contrast" between the palaces of the rich and hovels of the poor in New Delhi. The debate with Mr. Saklatvala, Gandhiji closed with the classic formula of liberalism: "It is not given to all of us to agree with one another on all our opinions; but it is given to every one of us to tender the same respect for the opinions and actions of our fellows as we expect for our own" (p. 303).

In articles on cow-protection Gandhiji lays down with clarity and utmost realism the conditions for its success. Goshalas should be scientifically managed and should function as model dairies and model tanneries. They should be conducted on a no-loss, no-profit basis. He argued that "what is economically wrong cannot be religiously right" (p. 392). It is in this context that Gandhiji stresses the fact of "changes in our ways of thought and life in every age", argues against the "horrible mental death" of social stagnation and against the superstitious acceptance of even the swadeshi doctrine. "If. . . we cannot make the sewing needle in the village, we should not set our face against the easily available and cheap needle from Austria. I see nothing wrong in accepting from any quarter whatever is good. . . and which we can assimilate" (p. 352).

How far from fanatical Gandhiji was can be seen again in the letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta suggesting that the latter in the interests of health consider seriously a return to meat-eating (p. 335). One must allow for a gap between ideal and achievement; his taking goat's milk (a form of animal food) was a concession to weakness (pp. 260-1). But such concessions should be exceptions, not the rule. In a letter to Mirabehn he makes it clear:

"The rule regarding vows is when in doubt interpret against yourself, i.e., in favour of greater restriction" (p. 277).

Earnest attempts to realize accepted ideals, constant self-examination, recognition and reporting of failures, all these are necessary steps in the process of living one's religion instead of merely professing or preaching it. Man as an evolving being can justify his existence and fulfil his destiny only by self-renewal. "A man to be a man must be twice-born as Hindus would say, reborn as Christians would say" (p. 247). Differing from Dr. B. S. Moonje's "distorted" (because literal) view of Hinduism, Gandhiji declares: "I claim in all humility to have lived Hinduism all my life" (p. 323).

One's religion comes to one not fixed and firm from some external authority but as a progressive revelation from within. "The Vedas, to me, are not the texts writ on paper, but my very conscience and the In-dweller" (p. 90). Acting on knowledge, one learns from action. "Learning without practice goes waste and serves only to turn one's head. Whatever therefore one has learned one should immediately reduce to action" (p. 428). From the study of the Vedas and the scriptures we can derive full benefit only by putting them "in the crucible of modern conditions, by objective observation and intense churning" (p. 430).

Re-interpreting the scriptures in the light of one's own experiences, one discovers unexpected agreement among contemporary seekers. For example, the words "without a cause" in *St. Matthew*, v. 22 in the Authorized Version were rejected by Gandhiji as inconsistent with truth and ahimsa, and he found that the words had been omitted by later translators (p. 355). In exercising this liberty of interpretation, one runs the least risk and one suffers no loss when one works out "one's own salvation in the religion of one's own forefathers, for, a seeker after Truth finds out that all religions melt and become one in God Who is one and the same for all His creatures" (p. 353).

Gandhiji was well aware of the rich poetic appeal of the Puranas and their efficacy in fostering love of dharma (p. 237). For the honour of women the examples of Sita and Draupadi, "free and independent", offer far better protection than the *purdah* which we must tear down (p. 45). But the dharma which the ancient poems teach and which can sustain the people's morale should be rightly understood and practised. It is a dynamic tradition and demands constant self-effort for reform. The theory of karma is really intended to "work out all evil karma and he who does not do so is not entitled to belong to the human species" (p. 397).

Like scientific knowledge, ethical knowledge (which includes practice as well as theory) is also cumulative; it progresses through communication and comparison of results. "I am a humble but very earnest seeker after truth. And in my search, I take all fellow-seekers in uttermost confidence so that I may know my mistakes and correct them" (p. 246). It is not easy and it may not be necessary to decide which fellow-seeker is competent to receive and comment on the experimenter's reports. "We can pour out our hearts only where we can, but the waters may flow where they will" (p. 5).

Of special interest among the letters included in this volume are those addressed to Manilal and his bride Sushila, to the Ashram women and to Mirabehn. They reveal Gandhiji as an educator to whom the individual required "the same care and attention as the whole problem of swaraj would . . . "(p. 450). He seemed stern in his insistence on the ideal but was ever respectful of human individuality. With the utmost frankness and without the slightest embarrassment, he explained to Manilal and Sushila the necessity of self-control in the married state (pp. 55 and 73). In his letters to the Ashram women, many of whom had had little formal education, Gandhiji explained the role of women in national regeneration, gave them news which would interest them, discussed the affairs of the Ashram, and urged them to shed their timidity and prepare themselves for service of the country. This patient effort was amply rewarded when many of these women went to jail in the Satyagraha Movement of 1930-'32 and even faced police assaults.

But it is in the letters to Mirabehn that we see at their best Gandhiji's ways, stern or gentle as occasion demanded, of dealing with those who were bound to him with the tie of love. Mirabehn had joined the Ashram at the end of 1925, having dedicated her life to Gandhiji even before she had seen him (Appendix V). She was intensely attached to him personally and always wanted to be by his side to minister to his needs. But Gandhiji wanted her to transform her devotion to him into devotion to his work. "You come in daily touch with me by doing my work as if it was your own. . . . You have come to me not for me but for my ideals in so far as I live them. . . . And when in the course of the work, God brings us physically together, it is well, but it is well also when he keeps us apart in pursuance of the common object" (pp. 297-8). He wanted her to be a perfect woman, but, he told her, "you should grow along your own lines. . . . You must retain your individuality at all cost. Resist me

when you must" (p. 180). The news of Gandhiji's sudden illness alarmed Mirabehn and she was naturally anxious to be by his side. Gandhiji understood the quick changes in her mood and tried his human best to soothe her, but left her free to do as she pleased.

Asked for a message, he wrote to the Editor, *World's Youth*: "TRUTH and LOVE" have been jointly the guiding principle of my life. If God who is indefinable can be at all defined, then I should say that God is TRUTH. It is impossible to reach HIM, that is, TRUTH, except through LOVE. LOVE can only be expressed fully when man reduces himself to a cipher. This process of reduction to cipher is the highest effort man or woman is capable of making. It is the only effort worth making, and it is possible only through ever-increasing self-restraint" (p. 452).

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews, as also passages which are not by Gandhiji, have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a date-line or where the date of writing has special significance and is ascertainable.

References to Volume I of this series are to the August 1958 edition. References to *An Autobiography* cite only the Part and Chapter, in view of the varying pagination in different editions.

In the source-line, S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to those available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

Textual items, received too late for inclusion in their chronological order, have been given in the Addenda.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the Volume are also provided at the end.

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1. *LETTER TO LALCHAND J. VORA*

[*January 21, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI LALCHAND,

I have your letter. The rule about balancing the credit and the debit sides does apply as much to khadi as to cow-protection. In the beginning we look forward to large profits but some losses are incurred all the same. They are usually debited to the capital account. In the case of cow-protection too we are bound to suffer some initial losses. But once it takes root there ought not to be any losses. And to judge the stability of a religious movement, we should survey its progress over a decade. If the losses steadily mount, the movement has not taken root and needs reform. Now the khadi movement is only six years old and yet I find the losses diminishing every year and in some cases the balance is already even. I expect similar results from Kathiawar. Do write to me about any flaws you come across, after considering this viewpoint.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SJT. LALCHAND JECHAND VORA
BAGASRA, BHAYANI
KATHIAWAR, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7753. Courtesy: Lalchand Vora

2. *SPEECH AT MOTIHARI*[2]

January 22, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND BROTHERS,

This visit to Motihari has revived old and sacred memories[3]. This region is to me like Sabarmati. I can stop here only for an hour. This time is inadequate, but it is in God's hands whether I stop here one hour or longer. I have to take the train that leaves at three or a quarter past. So my reply has to be brief.

[1] From the postmark
[2] At a meeting held in front of the District Board office
[3] Of the Champaran movement of 1917; *vide* Vol. XIII.

I can only thank you for the address[1] you have presented me. I shall long remember this address. I commend you for the work which the address says you have done. I am obliged to you also for the language of the address.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 2-2-1927

3. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ON THE TRAIN,
Sunday, January 23, 1927

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

Bhai Amritlal Thakkar will perhaps refuse to accept the presidentship of the Kathiawar Political Conference. The very adjective "political" is unpleasant to him, though he will have to say nothing about politics. I feel that in any conference of Indian State subjects, politics has at present no place at all. Those people have not yet learnt to work collectively. I therefore think that it should devote all its attention to the spinning-wheel. In case Amritlal says 'No', I hope you would accept the presidentship yourself. I believe your views on the subject are much the same as mine. But if there is disagreement between us, you are free to refuse to shoulder this burden. You must not refuse simply on the ground that it will be a burden on you for I am sure we can cope with it. Please reply by wire and address to Jamui (Bihar) where we expect to pass part of a day, during which we have to rush through two other places as well.

On Friday, we shall be in Arrah and reach Patna on Sunday. On Monday evening we leave Patna for Gondia *via* Calcutta, reaching Gondia on Wednesday. Manilal says that deep in her mind Manibehn has a desire to marry. I have made searching inquiries; she has no idea of marrying for the present at any rate. We must support her in this attitude. Please stop worrying about it and leave it to me. I am arranging to send her to Karachi. She is willing to go there. The climate will suit her and she will be able to do fine work.

[1] Printed on khaddar and encased in a silver replica of the Ashoka pillar

You may expect the rest from either Mahadev or Devdas. I am keeping well.

BAPU

SJT. VALLABHBHAI PATEL
MUNICIPAL PRESIDENT
KHAMASA GATE
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 11-2

4. *SPEECH AT BETTIAH*[1]

January 23, 1927

Mahatmaji made a joint reply. He said that he was glad to see the people of Bettiah after a fairly long time. Champaran, and in it Motihari and Bettiah, he said, were sacred places to him. He had got himself partly acquainted with the poverty of modern India from his experiences in Champaran where he had seen with his own eyes how miserable an existence the poor people of the villages usually had. He was glad that the Municipality had done so much of work and hoped that the water problem they were confronted with should be effectively solved by dint of determination and perseverance of the people in the near future. If pure water, pure milk and pure air were not supplied to the townsmen, he said, the Municipality had no justification for existing. The mission of the Municipality was to purify the civic life and he hoped that they would succeed in achieving that object.

Referring to primary education, he said that in India, specially in Champaran, spinning must form a part of the curriculum of primary education. Knowledge of letters, he said, was of course necessary, absolutely necessary, but that knowledge without any vocational training would be absolutely useless to the poor people of India. Unless some sort of vocational training was given to the students in rudimentary stage, they would not learn the lesson of self-help in their after-life. He hoped that spinning would receive necessary attention of the municipal commissioners of Bettiah.

Referring to the goshala, he said that if they really had any sort of love for the cows they must follow the way he had suggested. Every goshala must contain a fair number of good cows and they must be made to yield good milk. The townsmen should be supplied with this pure milk and if goshalas were properly conducted that milk must be cheaper than any other milk in the market.

[1] In reply to the addresses in Hindi presented by the Bettiah Municipality, Hindu Sabha, goshala and local "untouchables"

Side by side with such dairy farms, tanneries should also be maintained and the income thus derived should be spent over the maintenance of cows. It was the Hindus themselves who were primarily responsible for the miserable condition of Indian cows. He said that the goshalas should be conducted on proper and scientific lines and then alone would the real purpose of such farms be served.

Continuing, he said that cow-protection, protection of women, and the regeneration of the untouchables were all included in the duties of a municipality. As long as even one woman had to go astray for her daily bread, the men had no right to live; as long as even one cow remained in her present miserable condition, they had no right to exist; and if the pernicious custom of untouchability remained in force the Hindus would be wiped out of India in the near future.

Addressing the Hindu Sabha, he said that if they wanted really to save the dying Hindu race they must even now turn to charkha work. Whatever other ways might be suggested to achieve that end, charkha work must form the nucleus of them all.

Concluding, he made a very pathetic appeal in the name of the poor people of India and of God to the audience to help him with money to carry on the great work and to use khaddar in preference to all other cloth. He asked the audience to purchase khadi which was stocked at the meeting as usual.

The Searchlight, 30-1-1927

5. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

BETTIAH,
January 24, 1927

CHI. MIRA[1],

I have your interesting booklet from Kangri. I read it through in a motor[-car] in full motion. There is no rest. But as you have rightly judged, the whole tour is inspiring. Champaran has sacred memories for me. Champaran really introduced me to India. It is a perfect delight to see these tens of thousands of childlike faces all shining with an indefinable hope. They readily part with their coppers and rupees. Idleness which has now become second nature they will not part with easily. But one feels that even that is going.

[1] The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

Tulsi Maher[1] is with me. We are very near Nepal as you must know. You must locate the places I pass through in your map. T.M. is eager to meet you before he ascends to the hills. But he thinks you are too far away.

It was quite like you to have gone in an ekka to the Government House. You have done your duty by the friends[2].

You will walk out in the jungles about you with the young men there. They must have told you that the choice of the spot was Shraddhanandji's. The whole of the Gurukul conception was his.

Today we are in Bettiah—the place where I was longest when I was working for the people.

You should perhaps know that I send most of your letters to the Ashram for being read to the members. They are so beautiful. Those that contained your criticism of the attitude of the Kanya Gurukul I did not send. I destroyed them. Your final and considered judgment on the working of the Gurukul I have sent there. I mean the letter from which I have sent the extract to Ramdevji. If henceforth you want me to do otherwise, you will please tell me. I do not want you to restrain yourself because other eyes may see your letter. Our attitude should be this: We can pour out our hearts only where we can, but the waters may flow where they will. But all may not easily be able to assimilate or even appreciate that attitude. You will tell me how you feel.

Are you getting stronger?

In order that you may not be anxious, know that I shall be writing to you every Monday at least. When the post will reach you depends upon where I am. Calcutta is the quickest route for reaching Khandesh. I am therefore on the 1st at Calcutta, Khadi Pratishthan, 170, Bowbazar Street. We reach Gondia, B. N. Rly., on the 2nd. Then I do not know. But you will be safe enough to locate me at Nagpur and Wardha on 3rd and then continue to send letters to Wardha till you have definite dates from me.

You are making your corrections in the autobiographical chapters[3] as they come to you. It will be interesting to see your corrections when the tour is finished.

[1] Of Nepal, who was Mirabehn's first carding teacher in Sabarmati.

[2] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "I went to see the Home Member regarding two Muslim friends I had known in Berlin, who were at that time exiles."

[3] Then being published serially in *Young India*

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5200. Courtesy: Mirabehn

6. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

BETTIAH,
Posh Vad 6, 1983 [January 24, 1927]

SISTERS,

Today we are in Bettiah. It is the town where I stayed most of the time in 1917[1] during my Champaran work. There are groves of mango-trees in this area and they are very lovely. There are legends about Rama and Sita connected with almost every place around here. But it is not possible for me to spend time describing all this to you.

I see that your class has been growing. I agree entirely with Kaka Saheb[2]. If the Ashram does not train women workers devoted to service, where else can they be trained? You yourselves have to answer this question. We may not have enough health, ability or learning for doing such work. But if we have pure devotion all else will follow. Devotion means faith—faith in God and faith in oneself. Such faith leads one to make all sacrifices. Sacrifice for its own sake is hard to practise, but if it is undertaken for service, it becomes easy. No mother would sleep on damp ground deliberately. But she would gladly do so if she could thus enable her child to sleep on a dry patch.

I find that this year I shall not be able to stay in the Ashram for a long time. I am sorry for this. But we must find happiness even in misfortune. I must wander about in the interest of khadi. Only thus can I carry the message of khadi to the masses.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3636

[1] The source has "1906".
[2] D. B. Kalelkar

7. *LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA*

Silence Day, Posh Vad 6 [January 24, 1927][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

This time I have not yet had your weekly letter.

You must not become impatient, nor should you try to do everything. The temptation to do too much leaves everything undone. Your aim therefore should be to do one thing at a time and do it well. I write this because Kaka Saheb is encouraging you all. I am glad he does it. Such encouragement helps one to achieve quick results; but results can be achieved quickly only when we gauge our abilities and take up manageable tasks.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8702. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

8. *LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI*

BETTIAH,
Silence Day [January 24, 1927][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Herewith letters from Balkrishna as also my reply to him. Please post them to his address.

I have written to doctor about Rukhi.

It appears we shall need a waterworks at the Ashram. The water will have to be lifted after digging deep into the river. Get some expert to prepare an estimate. Contact Vallabhbhai. Is not the water to blame for so much illness there? It is no good if we can avoid illness only with the greatest care. Please think it over. I am sure you looked very well after Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence who visited the Ashram especially at my instance. It appears Saklatwala too paid a visit. I hope you

[1] From the reference to a weekly letter from the addressee as president of the Ashram women. The addressee was elected to that office in December, 1926.

[2] From date-line Bettiah and the reference to Rukhi's illness

have the latest letter from Mirabehn which I had asked Subbaiya to send over to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tulsi Maher will now reach there soon; at the moment he is travelling with me.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8693. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

9. *LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA*

BETTIAH,
Monday, Pausa Krishna 6 [January 24, 1927]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter.

I have sent the Rs. 8,000 to Jamnalalji; I presume the sum is meant for the Charkha Sangh.

I am doing a lot of thinking about *shuddhi*[1]. The way it is done today has nothing to do with religion. Those who were converted either by force or through ignorance—do they need 'purification'? They were not at all converted. The question is solely one of broad-mindedness on the part of the Hindus. Our movement should be to oppose the method of conversion employed by Christianity and Islam; conversion should be primarily based on a change of inner conviction. If we regard this method of conversion as wrong, why follow it? We should discover and follow some clean way of counteracting any attacks on our faith. Through the *shuddhi* movement we only encourage corruption and obstruct worthwhile reformation among the Hindus. The present movement has absolutely no rational basis. We can think over it at leisure when you get some time. I do not want any activity to be suspended merely because I say so. This cannot benefit us. It is proper to introduce a change only when and in so far as the validity of my views is established clearly and independently. That is why I am holding my patience and keeping silent. I would suggest your joining me on my tours for a

[1] Reconversion to Hinduism; literally, "purification"

few days when you are free from the Assembly. On the 1st of February I shall be in Calcutta on my way to Gondia.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6143. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

10. *ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS*

[After *January 24, 1927*][1]

QUESTION: 1. What do you think about the Government of India's policy of sending Indian troops to China?

ANSWER: The Government's action of despatching the troops to China without consulting leaders of public opinion is improper and highly objectionable.

2. What is your opinion about the Viceroy's recent speech in the Assembly?

It was extremely disappointing.

3. Do you have faith in the constitutional self-government or independent swaraj?

I have faith in swaraj which includes independence if and whenever India desires it.

4. What was your object of defining swaraj as Ramraj in your recent speech at Banaras?

I defined swaraj as Ramraj as I often do because it is a graphic description for a moral government based upon truth and non-violence, in other words universal religion.

5. Your appeal of 10 lakhs for Shraddhanand Fund has created anxiety and suspicion in the minds of the Mussalmans.

Whilst those who believe in *shuddhi*, *tabligh* or proselytizing have a perfect right to make an appeal for funds for carrying on such propaganda so long as it is honest and above board, my association with the appeal for funds was and is confined to the cause of the removal of untouchability for the reasons ex-

[1] From the reference to the "Viceroy's Speech" inaugurating the Legislative Assembly on January 24, 1927; the Viceroy had stated that the Indian Government had agreed to the despatch of Indian troops to China. *Vide* also "Our Helplessness", 3-2-1927.

pressed in my article[1] on the appeal in *Young India* which please see.

SYED ZAHIRUL HAQ
BARH (PATNA DISTRICT)

From a photostat: S.N. 11826

11. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Tuesday [January 25, 1927][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got both your letters together. Wire me when Chi. Rukhi has her operation. Has Govindbhai come over? There has been no letter from him for some time. It appears Bhai Pragji will not come. He is again inclined to go to South Africa. If he does not come I shall make no alternative arrangement now. As a matter of fact, you need not seek the Working Committee's permission, if you have to appoint a person in connection with, say, the tannery or the dairy. All the same it is certainly better to consult one another in all matters. Engage Navin in any department you like; he should be encouraged. The Working Committee has to be consulted for expenditure covered by the budget. But the tannery, the dairy and the [Ramachandra] lift are items which are not covered by the budget. There has to be a separate provision for expenditure on these items. We should therefore assess them not from the economic angle but in the light of the social and spiritual benefits to the Ashram. That all such activities should be undertaken on the Ashram premises has already been decided on. As far as I remember it was decided that Shivabhai Haribhai's salary should be fixed at Rs. 50. It does not matter if it is re-approved. I have noted what you say about the kitchens. Give them all the attention you can. Manilal will be there soon. Get work out of him. Ratilal is very undecided. Two days ago he insisted on going there, but now he is silent about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7772. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXII, pp. 515-6.

[2] From the reference to Rukhi's operation, the letter appears to have been written before the one dated January 31, 1927 and after that dated January 24, 1927.

12. INTERVIEW TO FREE PRESS OF INDIA, MUZAFFARPUR

January 25, 1927

Interviewed by a Free Press representative, Mahatma Gandhi expressed his opinion regarding the invitations received by him for visiting America. Mahatmaji said plainly that he felt rather embarrassed in accepting the tempting invitations. But he said that he had not as yet succeeded in attaining the desired goal of his mission. Unless his achievements took a definite substantial shape, he would not like to visit foreign countries which are courteously extending him invitations. Mahatmaji further said that a big purse awaited him in America for the Indian cause, but he felt that it would undermine our self-reliance and self-respect.

The Hindu, 29-1-1927

13. SPEECH AT MISSION SCHOOL, MUZAFFARPUR

January 25, 1927

After visiting the [Municipal Ayurvedic] Dispensary, he went to visit the Ramakrishna Mission and was received by the sannyasis and workers. He was shown round the Ashram and the hospital attached to it. He next proceeded to visit the Mission School for the Indian Christian girls. Several girls were seen working at the charkha who all appeared like novices and Mahatmaji asked the European lady in charge herself to learn spinning before expecting her students to learn it. The table cloth in the hall was a foreign piece and all the girls and their teachers were clad in foreign clothes. At this Mahatmaji remarked that they must have faith in khaddar before having faith in spinning. On being asked by the superintendent to speak something, Mahatmaji remarked that he had no other message except that of khaddar to give them. They might belong to whatever religion they chose, but if they had no love for the poor there was no chance of their prayer being heard by God. In the peculiar circumstances of India, the love for the poor could be given no other [or] better expression than by wearing khadi and he requested the girls to put on khadi and khadi alone.

The Searchlight, 30-1-1927

14. *SPEECH AT TILAK MAIDAN, MUZAFFARPUR*

January 25, 1927

Mahatma Gandhi made a joint reply[1] in the course of which he thanked all the public bodies for presenting him addresses. He particularly thanked the Seva Samiti for kindly complying with his request not to read the address in the meeting. He said he had read the address himself and would like to reply to it in the beginning. He said that he had been asked in that address as to whether they should remain non-violent in all cases and circumstances. His answer was an emphatic "yes". The real worth of a man, said he, was tested only when he was put on trial. A man might tell the truth for his own good; that was no test of his truthfulness. A man might remain non-violent out of necessity; that was no proof of his having faith in non-violence. It was only when a man could remain non-violent in spite of repeated provocation that the sincerity and strength of his faith was tested. He said that he could cite innumerable arguments in support of non-violence from the Vedas, the *Gita*, the Koran and the Bible. He had no time to do so. But he assured them that the central teaching of all religions was non-violence.

Continuing, he said that the address referred to the murder[2] of Swami Shraddhanand. The language used in that connection was improper, but considering the fire and agony in the writer's heart he would not blame him for the language used. But he wanted to tell them that his grief at the murder of Swamiji was no less than that of anyone of the members of the Seva Samiti. He would like to say, it was greater and more intense than theirs. But yet he stuck to what he had said before. Such actions, he said, could not kill the entire Hindu race. It was unwise and improper for them to be either discouraged or be filled with the spirit of revenge or murder. The murder of Swami Shraddhanand, he said, could be turned to good account. It should teach them, the Hindus and Muslims, that others had as much right to speak their mind and follow the dictates of their conscience as themselves. It should further teach them to cleanse their hearts with his precious blood. There was nothing to be sorry for at his death; they should rather be proud of such heroic death.

Continuing, he said that there was no reason why one should go mad because others were so disposed. There could be no necessity, he said, of committing violence for the protection of religion. Whenever they did such acts, he said, they must know that they were going out of the path of religion.

[1] To addresses by the Municipality, District Board, District Congress Committee and other public bodies

[2] On December 23, 1926

True religion lay in cultivating friendship even with one's enemies. But such submission, such non-violence was not the same thing as cowardice. They must be prepared to die themselves instead of killing others, they must be prepared to shed their own blood instead of shedding anyone else's blood. The man who did not hesitate to die for the cause of righteousness was unconquerable. The whole world might be prepared to support violence but his faith in non-violence would remain unaltered and unalterable. He would continue to believe that non-violence was the central truth of all religions, Islam certainly not excepted. He would like to tell them with all the emphasis he could command that their faith in their religion was to be judged by the standard to what extent they were prepared to sacrifice themselves for its cause. He said that he was as staunch a believer in Hinduism as anyone of them but he would tell them that, if they wanted to be true to their religion, they must learn to worship truth, non-violence and *brahmacharya*. They must learn to spurn the total accumulated wealth of the world. Hinduism never sanctioned violence or dishonesty. They misinterpreted the scriptures to justify their actions. Yudhishthira might have told a lie but they must remember that he suffered for that sin instantly and later on too. If they wanted to serve religion there was no other alternative for them except that of truth and non-violence.

Proceeding, he thanked the Municipality, the District Board, the Local Board and the Congress Committee for the attention they had paid to khaddar work. He thanked those who had come out of the schools and colleges and those who had given up their lucrative practice at the Bar at the call of the country and he particularly thanked the Congress Committee for referring to those patriotic young men. The address of the Congress Committee referred to a very old and short period of their national history—but how glorious was that period, how sacred was its memory to him! He did not like to speak anything on any other activities of the Congress. Important they certainly were, but to him khaddar work was of paramount importance in the present circumstances of the country.

Continuing, he said that khaddar alone was the inexhaustible source of their strength, if they could make even that one work successful, swaraj would be at their gate. As long as they did not learn to sympathetically consider the case of the poor people of India, they had no right to demand swaraj and as long as they did not cultivate that feeling they were no true advocates of swaraj either. So long as there remained one poor man who might be starving in the county, swaraj for India was meaningless to him. To feed the hungry, to give water to the thirsty, that was the religious duty of every human being and so long as each one was not filled with that noble idea, *dharmarajya*, he said, was unattainable. How were they to practise that religion? Through khaddar and khaddar alone. No other better way was suggested to him and he believed that no other better way was there.

He next explained at length the economy of khaddar and very clearly showed how every farthing spent over khaddar went to the pockets of the poor. Should they not give even that much of help to the poor villagers who supplied them with their daily bread? It was the religious duty of every human being to help the poor and the needy. Would they fail in their duty? Khaddar might be coarse, khaddar might be costly, but still that was the gift of their mother. Should they throw aside that precious gift? They should rather consider foreign cloth as coarse and costly and put khaddar pieces on their heads in profound reverence.

The Searchlight, 30-1-1927

15. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, MUZAFFARPUR[1]

January 25, 1927

Mahatmaji . . . said that when he was asked to address a students' meeting at Muzaffarpur he agreed to do so even without any inducement for he remembered that it was the students of Muzaffarpur who had given him shelter on the first day when he came to begin his Champaran work. That event it was impossible for him to forget and he readily accepted the opportunity offered to him of addressing the students of that place with the hope that they might give him their help and support even now when he was badly in need of help from the student community of India. He said that they reminded him of the days of 1920. Those were the glorious days indeed, the tremendous upheaval of national consciousness that was visible in the country in those days had of course now subsided, but the effects of the movement were there. If they had failed to maintain the same level of enthusiasm and sacrifice, they alone were not to blame for the same. He would not, of course, call them again to do the same work in the changed circumstances of the country but he would still maintain that those were the sacred days for them and the path he had then suggested was still the best path for Indians to follow in their struggle for freedom. If they could not follow that path for a long time they need not be ashamed for that. He did not wonder that they had halted in their marches but looking at the situation in the country he wondered how they could march so far in those days. If the programme he had given could be carried into action success was undoubted, but he would not call them to that programme again until an opportune moment had arrived. But in the mean time he had one work to ask them to do and that was the work of khaddar. All men, high or low, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, students and Government servants—all would easily join this work and make it a success. The student community was particularly fitted to do this work. Pandit Malaviya

[1] Held in the Town Hall at 6 p.m.

had shown them the way by the example of the Hindu University. It was only the other day that the students of the Hindu University had given him a purse of about one thousand rupees. In proportion to the number of students at Muzaffarpur the purse they had presented him was far less than what he received at the Hindu University. He expected the students to help the khaddar movement with all their wealth and energy and he hoped that Muzaffarpur students would not lag behind the students of other parts of the country. Not only would they help him with money on that day but he hoped that they would save something from their pocket expenses and continue to help the movement regularly. Living as they were in the headquarters of the provincial khadi organization they might learn the khaddar work in all its phases and spend their spare hours in that work. He would ask them even to spin for at least half an hour a day not for earning money themselves but to set an example to the poor unemployed villagers. But all this they must do only after having faith in khaddar; and in order to acquire that faith, they must enquire of himself or of anyone else about the economy of khaddar.

Continuing, he explained at length the economy of khaddar and said that if they were human beings they must feel for their fellowmen. How could they expect to get swaraj if they had not got even that much of fellow-feeling? As true children of India it was their duty to refuse all that every Indian could not afford to enjoy. But he was not going to ask them to do that. What he wanted them to do was that they should purchase khadi and thus give employment and food to thousands of their unemployed countrymen and women. There was no ban upon the students in respect of khadi-wearing. He described how Rajagopalachari was invited in a Government college in Madras to speak on khaddar and how with the help of the principal, professors and students he was successful in starting a Khadi Union in that college. He hoped that the example of that college would be followed even in Muzaffarpur. To understand the principle of economy of khaddar they might read the prize essay[1] with profit. He hoped that after finishing the book they all might become believers in khadi. The only objection, he said, that could remain against wearing of khadi was love of fashion and ease and he asked the students as to how they could expect to get swaraj if they could not make even so little sacrifice for the sake of the country. He exhorted the students to promise solemnly on the spot that they would use nothing but khaddar henceforward and also to burn their foreign clothes if possible.

Continuing, he said that he could not finish his speech before referring to one thing else since this was a students' meeting and that was *brahmacharya*. He said that he used to have frequent communication and association with students and he had come to learn what a moral degeneration had over-

[1] "Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving" by S. V. Puntambekar and N. S. Varadachari; for a short review, *vide* Vol. XXXII, p. 517.

taken the student community. He was expressing his views on the subject through *Young India*, *Navajivan* and his autobiography[1]. But he would warn the students against further downfall. There was no wonder, he said, that the students should get so much corrupted, for the whole atmosphere of the country had become so saturated with corrupt ideas that it was almost impossible for the students to get rid of its influence. The text-books, the cinemas, the theatres were all spreading immoral influences and unless the students were given timely warning and necessary precautions were taken the whole country would go to the wall. In order to save the students Swami Shraddhanand, the hero, had established his Gurukul at the foot of the Himalayas far away from the temptations of modern town life. His institutions might have many faults, but the ideal was all right and it was not to be allowed to perish.

Continuing, he said that it was a sheer mad idea to attempt to win swaraj by means of a few bombs and cartridges. The swaraj to be attained by such means could not be swaraj for the poor masses of the country. To win swaraj for the poor, khaddar was the only effective way and that was why he had been asking them to make that movement successful. *Brahmacharya*, the source of all strength, should therefore be strictly observed by them and thus alone could they expect to make themselves fit for the great struggle. India, he said, was *karmabhumi*, *dharmabhumi*, *tyagabhumi*[2]—the Himalayas stood as the witness of that great fact. But everything depended on the strict observance of *brahmacharya*; if they wanted to establish once more *dharmarajya* in India, they were to proceed on the line of truth, righteousnes and *brahmacharya* fearing none except God and with Him as their friend and guide.

The Searchlight, 30-1-1927

16. SPEECH AT BEGUSARAI

January 26, 1927

Mahatmaji made a joint reply[3] and thanked all the three associations for presenting him addresses. He agreed with them that India was passing through a very critical and dangerous period. The country where thousands of people were dying of starvation for want of occupation, he said, was certainly on the verge of destruction. But the people themselves were largely responsible for this miserable state of their country. The Shastras taught them that

[1] Chapters of which were being published in *Navajivan* from November 29, 1925 and in *Young India* from December 3, 1925

[2] Land of action, of religion, of renunciation

[3] To three addresses by the local Board, goshala and the public, all written in Hindi and printed on khaddar

a man reaped as he sowed. As long as effective attempts were not made to feed the hungry and the starving people of India, he said, the condition of India would not change. It was by neglecting the masses that they had brought about that miserable condition of their country; and in their attempt to revive the old age of glory, they must better the condition of the masses.

Continuing, he said the primary duty of the intelligentsia of the country was to identify themselves with the masses and to establish a bond of living relationship with them. They had neglected them, they had exploited their resources for their own welfare, they had hitherto maintained themselves with the hard-earned wealth of the poor cultivators; they should now do penance for all their sins. If they really wanted to establish *dharmarajya* they should now serve those who had hitherto served them, they should change their entire mode of life and angle of vision and look at the things in their true perspective. They all might not be able to undergo the tremendous sacrifice that these works would involve. But to enable all to do their duty he had suggested to them a simple religion—that of charkha. With the death of charkha had begun the poverty of India and it was going on increasing as the time rolled on. It was an axiomatic truth, he said, that with the revival of charkha the ancient glory of India would be revived. He emphatically declared that the charkha was the thing which was capable of being universally used and of giving employment to thousands of unemployed men and women. He regretted that while khadi had made considerable progress in other parts of the country it had gone down in Begusarai. The only reason that he could imagine of this mishap, could be, that the workers had either lost faith in charkha or given up working for it. He appealed to the workers to devote a little of their time at least for khaddar work.

Referring to the goshala he said that in the forty long years of its existence it might have done much more than what it had done. But it was not the Begusarai goshala alone that had defects; almost all the goshalas in India were more or less conducted on wrong lines. In order to make the best use of the goshalas they should be conducted on proper scientific lines. The speaker next explained the economic and religious aspects of cow-protection and said that there was no reason of this being the bone of contention between the Hindus and the Muslims. He emphasized that dairy farms and tanneries must be attached to each goshala and the income derived from them should be spent on the welfare of the cattle. He regretted that even those who did not consider cow-protection as a religious duty or hold the cow in reverence paid more attention to cows than the cow-worshipping Hindus did. He said that the indifference of the Hindus towards cow-protection was alone responsible for the miserable condition of Indian cows and in order to better their condition they must rise to the full sense of duty.

Concluding, he once more appealed for money and regretted that there was no khaddar for sale at the meeting. But he exhorted the audience to

run at once to the khaddar shop in the town and clothe themselves in pure khadi.

The Searchlight, 4-2-1927

17. NATIONAL SCHOOLS

During my Bihar tour I came in touch with national schools which continue to flourish in spite of obstacles. But these schools demonstrate to me the reason for the apparent failure of the educational programme of Non-co-operation for they prove, at least for me, beyond a shadow of doubt that the thousands of boys who left Government schools went back not because they were weak, not because the parents were weak, but because the schoolmasters and professors lacked the necessary dynamic faith in their own programme. But as I have said, even they could not very well be held blameworthy. They were themselves products of the vicious educational system and they could not be expected to throw off all on a sudden all the effects of their old environment. The marvel is that in spite of tremendous odds so many still remain staunch to the ideal and manage to live in the face of overwhelming difficulties. But to the few who still remain staunch, I would make an earnest appeal to be absolutely truthful. Non-co-operation in every one of its branches had its positive aspect just as much as its negative. Indeed the positive aspect was the most permanent. The negative was useless without the positive. Mere withdrawal from Government schools was nothing if the withdrawal did not mean some corresponding constructive educational programme. Every unaffiliated school is not a national school simply because it is not affiliated and because it does not receive a grant-in-aid. Thousands of missionary schools could be called national if mere non-affiliation and non-acceptance of grant-in-aid was the one test. We have the definition of national educational institutions given to us by the Congress. The definition includes, among other important things, spinning as a compulsory subject. At one of the national schools in Bihar, I discovered that the charkha existed only in name and for show indifferently staged and the schoolmasters were themselves indifferent spinners. They hardly knew carding. They did not know a good charkha from a bad one. They did not know the qualities of a straight spindle. They did not know that it was necessary to have finer spindles in order to draw finer counts and to have a larger output. Almost every wheel that I examined produced a foreign and jarring

sound. The head master of a school whom I examined critically bravely admitted all the defects and has promised to remedy them. The lesson I should like to draw from this instructive experience is that national schoolmasters, if they are to make good their double claim should live up to it, that is, be truthful. If they do not believe in the charkha they must say so and leave their employers; if the parents who send their children do not believe in the charkha and do not want them to learn and practise spinning, the schoolmasters must refuse to take such children. But if they believe in the necessity of spinning as a necessary part of the curriculum, they must themselves master its science and technique and teach it to their pupils as they are expected to teach any other subject. It is not for them to say their pupils do not like it. It is for the teachers to make the subject they teach interesting. I hated chemistry which I subsequently learnt and appreciated as a most interesting study, only because my teacher did not know his subject sufficiently to make it interesting. Hundreds of boys will not take to geometry, a most fascinating recreation, simply because the teachers have no interest in their work and they have themselves not developed enough interest in it. Similarly for spinning. I know of no accomplished spinner who has not acknowledged spinning even as a pastime to be an interesting and uplifting study. A mere thumping on the piano would give a headache to a most willing listener, but the exquisite touch of a master would convert even one who has no ear for music. Even so with spinning. My proposal however at the present moment is not to demonstrate the entertaining power of the spinning-wheel but to drive home the truth that if it has to be taught in national schools it must be by teachers who know it thoroughly and who have patience with their pupils. Let us not by our own ignorance or indifference be guilty of producing in our pupils a nausea for an occupation which is generally acknowledged as one of primary national importance.

Honesty demands that schoolmasters who do not know spinning or have no faith in it should, even though their refusal may cost their dismissal, refuse to have anything to do with it in their schools. If we are truthful, it will be well with us in the end. If we are untruthful nothing will save us. And such a tremendous movement like hand-spinning which depends for its success solely upon the character of the workers in it has no chance of success if the workers resolve to camouflage. Let me incidentally remind managers of national institutions that it would be also better and more profitable in the long run to introduce taklis instead of the

spinning-wheel. The best spinners among the boys may have good spinning-wheels and that also so long as they undertake to spin per month a minimum amount of yarn of uniform kind and strength.

Young India, 27-1-1927

18. NOTES

A Good Englishwoman

In India, with the exception of a few who came in personal touch with that good Englishwoman, no one knew anything of Miss Florence Winterbottom, who, a friendly message from England tells me, has just died. She was among the rare men and women who find service its own reward, and she belonged to that class amongst the English who seek out and befriend forlorn causes in the teeth of odium, ridicule and opposition. She was a leading light of the ethical movement and was for some time president of the Union of Ethical Societies. She was secretary of the Emerson Club. I had the privilege of coming in touch with her when I went to England in charge of the first South African Indian Deputation in 1906. I knew nothing of her, but by reading in the papers about the doings of the Deputation in out-of-the-way corners of the leading dailies of London, she sought us out, she offered me a platform, she studied the question and in a variety of ways helped the cause that at that time had only a few chosen friends in England. She became from that time one of the most constant and painstaking supporters of the cause in South Africa. No one who came in contact with her failed to recognize in her fearlessness, honesty for the sake of honesty not merely as the best policy, and a capacity to take an exceptionally detached view of all things. Though intensely English, she was equally intensely international. Her patriotism never took the shape of justifying everything English whether good, bad or indifferent. When people tell me that non-violence is of no effect so far as English people are concerned, I renew my faith in non-violence and in English nature, or better still human nature, by thinking of instances like those of Miss Florence Winterbottom. May her soul rest in peace.

Khadi in Hospitals

In the very simple but well got up Gujarati Khadi Notes full of most interesting information published by the A. I. S. A.[1] Khadi

[1] All-India Spinners' Association

Bhandar of Bombay, at pages 62 and 63, I find a notice of Rs. 11,000 worth of khadi bought by and used in the King Edward Memorial Hospital owned by the Bombay Corporation. The notice gives a list of the articles bought. They include mattresses, covers, glass slips, surgeon's shoes, leggings, face-towels, screen covers, surgeon's overalls, pyjamas, skirts, gowns, table-covers, window blinds, white blankets, bed sheets, bed towels, surgeon's suits, etc. If all the national or private hospitals and kindred institutions were to make their cloth purchase in khadi, they would alone absorb the whole of the present yearly output of khadi throughout India. Not therefore that there will be no more khadi left; because when khadi sales need not be organized by khadi workers, by the demand becoming natural and khadi becoming a marketable article like ghee, there will be an unlimited production of khadi to meet the demand and all the khadi workers will be employed in organizing production alone. Of course there is no reason why Government institutions also should not whole-heartedly take in khadi. But that would be, in my opinion, an indication of the coming change of heart. Swarajist councillors may at least test the Government on the point.

To Khadi Workers

Sjt. Vithaldas Jerajani draws attention to one defect in the khadi dhotis that are being generally supplied. They tear at the borders and it is at the borders that the severest strain is put upon dhotis and saris. He suggests that the difficulty can be overcome with just a little attention being paid to the weaving of borders by half an inch or three-fourths twisted double threads being taken. The border-yarn should be specially selected from strong yarn and from this selection double thread should be treated in the manner suggested above. It would be easier and cheaper if the border-yarn is specially prepared and supplied to the weavers just as ordinary yarn is supplied. And to this end every khadi centre will have to stock border-yarn. In several centres this is already being done but it is not at all universal. And unless all dhotis and saris are invariably prepared with strong borders as the movement progresses, we shall be overwhelmed with complaints. Those who are special lovers of khadi are satisfied with anything that they can get, but the class of buyers that is fast coming into being will not be satisfied with anything that is indifferently made. They will insist upon durability, appearance, variety and cheapness all combined into one and it would be necessary for us to respond to the public taste and the public demand to the extent that it is possible for us.

'UNDERSTANDING WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE'

Let the reader share with me the following from Hierotheus which I find in the passages a friend sends me for my day of silence:

> To me it seems right to speak without words, and understand without knowledge, that which is above words and knowledge. This I apprehend to be nothing but the mysterious silence and mystical quiet which dissolves forms. Seek, therefore, silently and mystically, that perfect and primitive union with the Arch-Good.

Young India, 27-1-1927

19. SPEECH AT KHARAGPUR[1]

January 27, 1927

Mahatmaji thanked the associations for presenting him addresses but expressed his inability to reply to them separately owing to the shortness of time. He said that he had expressed his views on the subjects mentioned in the addresses in many of his other speeches and he requested the audience to read them in newspapers.

He thanked the people of Kharagpur for maintaining a well-organized national school and hoped that they would continue to maintain it. He said that he was sorry that a representation was made to him that morning by a section of Kharagpur people requesting him to permit the school to be re-affiliated to the Government university. But on enquiry no one could tell him anything against the institution itself. The only argument they could put forward was that the boycotts had all failed and that whereas the pleaders and the councillors had gone back, the students should also be allowed to do so. He said he did not understand why a man, disregarding the dictates of his own conscience, should follow other men, though in the wrong only because they happen to be in the majority. It is the duty of a man to stick to truth in the teeth of universal opposition and he congratulated the students and the teachers who were still clinging to the ideal of national education. No human organization could be altogether without flaw and he invited the critics to reform the national school if there were any defects in it. He said that he had prescribed Non-co-operation in 1920 as the religious duty of every Indian; owing to the weakness of the people that programme could not be carried for a very long time. But if certain things were created out of that movement there was no reason why they should be destroyed because of the death of the

[1] In reply to addresses by Union Committee, Santals, Hindu Sabha, goshala and Arya Samaj

movement itself. He appealed to the workers to conduct the schools by all means.

Continuing, he said that his tour was intended to preach the message of khaddar all over the country and he had come to them to beg money for that work. He said that it was an axiomatic truth that the killing poverty of India began with the disappearance of charkha from this land and to bring back her ancient prosperity, revival of charkha was an absolute necessity. He said, people often fasted for the sake of religion but thousands of poor Indians today were fasting—nay starving on account of the want of food and that want was traceable to the want of any occupation. Charkha was the thing, he said, to give some sort of employment to these poor starving people and he appealed to the audience to consider it their religious duty to work for the success of that movement. He said that there was a time in India when charkha was considered as important as household hearth and he requested the people to give that place of honour once more to this little but powerful instrument. He appealed to the audience to religiously avoid all foreign clothes and clothe themselves in pure khadi, woven by their own brothers with yarn spun by their own starving sisters.

Continuing, he spoke a few words on untouchability and said that bad practice in the garb of religion, as untouchability certainly was, was doubly condemnable. He appealed to the Hindus in the name of Swami Shraddhanand to abolish this pernicious custom and said that the best way they could commemorate the name of the great saint was by removing this evil. He hoped that the Hindus and the Muslims should clean their hearts with the blood of Swami Shraddhanand and, undaunted like him, march hand in hand to their desired goal.

The Searchlight, 4-2-1927

20. *SPEECH AT JAMUI*

January 27, 1927

Mahatmaji thanked the people on behalf of the All-India Spinners' Association for presenting him the purse and said that the money would be credited to the account of the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. He explained the circumstances in which the said fund was inaugurated and said that the Fund was to be utilized to achieve the object which was dearest to Deshbandhu's heart at the time of his death, namely, khaddar work. He said that the collection for the Fund was stopped for one year because of his vow[1], but now that the period of his vow was over he hoped to tour all over the country to collect money for it.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXIX, pp. 380-2.

Continuing, he said if they wanted village reconstruction, if they wanted to serve the poor, if they wanted to make their relation with the villagers purer, they could proceed on one line alone—and that was, he said, the line of charkha. They had sinned by so long neglecting the poor, they had lived upon the hard-earned wealth of the poor cultivators, they had exploited them as Europe is exploiting Asia, and as a punishment for these sins they had fallen into their present abject state. They must do penance to expiate all these sins and for that purpose, they must serve those who have been serving them so long. How could they do so? It was not possible, he said, for all men to go into the villages and serve the labourers and cultivators personally. But they might serve them by giving them some sort of financial help and they could best do so by giving them an occupation.

Continuing, he said that spinning was the only industry which might flourish in every cottage and it was the work which was capable of being joined in by all persons irrespective of their age, sex, position and learning. Working at the charkha, he said, was a mahayajna, and he invited all to participate in it. He exhorted the audience to use khaddar in preference to all other sorts of cloth and said that the only unfounded arguments that they might put forward against wearing of khadi were that it was coarse and it was dear. But should they refuse the gift of their mother and go a-begging from door to door for better food if the gift of their mother happens to be comparatively worse? But then khaddar was gradually becoming finer and cheaper as well; and, if they gave it adequate patronage, he assured them that it would become finer and cheaper still. Whatever sacrifice the wearing of khaddar at present involved, he said, is the sacrifice that they must undergo for expiating all their past sins.

Continuing, he said that untouchability was a blot on the Hindu social system and it should be wiped out as soon as possible if the Hindus wanted to live as a race. He said that neither Manu nor Upanishad taught untouchability as it was practised today. He appealed to the Hindus in the name of Swami Shraddhanand to remove this pernicious custom and hoped that both Hindus and Muslims should turn into good account the murder of the great sannyasi by shaking off their cowardice and preparing them[selves] in every possible way for the great battle for swaraj.

Concluding, he said that the purse presented to him did not contain the gifts of all present in the meeting and he appealed to those who had not already paid to contribute according to their fullest capacity to the Fund for khaddar work and thus worship the memory of the great Deshbandhu. He requested the audience to purchase khaddar which was also stocked at the meeting.

The Searchlight, 4-2-1927

21. ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK, VANITA VISHRAM, SHAHABAD

Pausa Krishna 10, 1983 [January 28, 1927]

On seeing the Vanita Vishram, I am highly pleased and also equally distressed. I admire the donor and liked the quiet atmosphere around the premises. But I am distressed at the sight of a seven-year-old widow. I would request the management not to regard such girls as widows. It is not dharma, indeed it is the opposite of dharma, to do so. Such girls should be regarded as unmarried.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8044

22. CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT BIHAR VIDYAPITH, PATNA[1]

January 30, 1927

[Gandhiji] hoped, at the outset, that the *snatakas*[2] would live in their lives the vows they had solemnly taken that day and said, as he did at the time of the Gujarat Vidyapith Convocation[3], that the Vidyapith would have more than justified its existence if it turned out even one ideal student and one ideal teacher. For what was the function of these institutions? To discover gems, no matter how few, "of the purest ray serene". And he proceeded to give reminiscences of his South African days:

I lived in South Africa for 20 years, but never once thought of going to see the diamond mines there, partly because I was afraid lest as an 'untouchable' I should be refused admission and insulted. But when Gokhale was there I felt it my duty to show him the chief industry of the place. There was no fear of his being insulted. So we went to the biggest mine there, and saw scenes which I have not forgotten. Mountains upon mountains of excavated earth and stone and no diamonds! It was after millions were sunk in excavating millions of tons of earth and stone that a handful of precious stones could be discovered. And when Cullinan, the

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Graduates

[3] On November 28, 1926; *vide* Vol. XXXII, p. 382.

owner, discovered the stone named after him—a stone larger than the one which adorned the crown of the Czar and the Kohinoor —after years of labour and millions of pounds had been spent on it, you might imagine his joy. He felt that his lifework was done. If we should not grudge to spend any amount of labour and capital on a thing which had but an artificial value, how much should we spend on excavating jewels from the human mine? Let us work away in that spirit.

That was an apt simile, apter than Ruskin used when he coined that phrase "manufacture of souls". That manufacture is only in God's power. We human mortals have but to discover what is already there hidden by God.

He then referred to the positive and negative aspects of all non-co-operating institutions. The negative which consisted of withdrawal of all connection with Government had been already achieved by the existing institutions. When he thought of the number of students and teachers that he had called out, he felt not the slightest regret. Nor did he feel repentant for the fact that many of these had gone back, that many were discontented and unhappy. He felt sorry for them, they had his deep sympathy, but regret or repentance he had none.

These troubles and sorrows are our daily lot, should be our daily lot. If observance of truth was a bed of roses, if truth cost one nothing and was all happiness and ease, there would be no beauty about it. We must adhere to truth even if the heavens should fall. What matters it, if by following truth we were to lose the whole world including even India? We shall be true votaries of truth only if we follow it to death, in the conviction that under God we will get back the things we hold dear including India. I know that a large number of our teachers and professors are restless, a few are starving. That is true penance necessary for a proper cleansing of the national atmosphere.

That was the negative aspect and he was glad it had been carried out and a fair share of penance had been gone through. But this dual world had a positive aspect too, and one which was more difficult if also more permanent. Where else was it to be fulfilled except in institutions like the Vidyapith? And he drew a contrast between the method of education followed in Europe and that followed in India.

In Europe the education follows the peculiar genius of the people. One thing is taught in three different countries in three different ways according to the varying culture and genius of each. Only we delight in slavishly following the English model. The whole objective of the present system was to make us faithful imitators

of the West. There is nothing novel in this, it is but the natural outcome of our having entrusted our affairs to those who never cared to know us. Poor Macaulay! What could he do? He sincerely believed that our Sanskrit literature was all superstition and he seriously thought he would give us something wholesome in the shape of Western culture! Let us not abuse him for having unintentionally worked our ruin. As a result of English being the medium of instruction, we have lost all originality. We have become birds without wings. The most we aspire to is a clerkship or editorship. One of us may under the system be a Lord Sinha, but everyone at best is designed to be part of the huge foreign machine. At Muzaffarpur a boy came and asked me if by going to a national school he could one day be a *lat*[1] saheb. I said, "No, you can be a village *lat*, but not a Lord Sinha. Only Lord Birkenhead can make you that."

He referred to the craze for more and more palatial buildings raised out of the money of the poor, and raised for the purpose of giving an education which was denied to the poor.

I had an occasion to visit the Economic Institute at Allahabad. As Prof. Jevons showed me over it and I was told that it had cost Rs. 30 lakhs (if my memory serves me right), I shuddered. You could not raise these palaces but by starving millions. Look at New Delhi which tells the same tale. Look at the grand improvements in first and second class carriages on railways. The whole trend is to think of the privileged few and to neglect the poor. If this is not Satanic, what is it? If I must tell the truth I can say nothing less. I have no quarrel with those who conceived the system. They could not do otherwise. How is an elephant to think for an ant? As Sir Lepel Griffin once put it in his speech as member of the South African Deputation, only the toad under the harrow knows where it pinches.[2] The arrangement of our affairs is in their hands and with the best will in the world, the best of them could not order our affairs as well as we could. For theirs is a diametrically opposite conception to ours. They think in the terms of the privileged few. We must think in the terms of the teeming millions. . . .

Let the *snatakas* take their degrees, learn anything they like, but let it centre round the charkha, let their economics and their science subserve the purpose of the charkha. Do not relegate the charkha to an odd corner. The charkha is the Sun of the solar

[1] Lord
[2] *Vide* Vol. VI, p. 114.

system of our activities. Without it Vidyapiths are Vidyapiths in name. Lord Irwin told God's truth when he said that for any advancement through the Councils we should look to the British Parliament. Let us not be angry with him. He cannot think but in the terms of the Parliament. The Sun of his system is London, the Sun of our system is the charkha. I may be mistaken in this, but, so far as I am not convinced of the mistake, I shall treasure it. The charkha at any rate is incapable of harming anybody and without it we and, if I may say so, even the world will go to rack and ruin. We know what Europe has been feeling after the War in which lies were propagated as the highest religion. The world is weary of the after-effects of the War and even as the charkha is India's comforter today, it may be the world's tomorrow, because it stands not for the greatest good of the greatest number but for the greatest good of all. Whenever I see an erring man, I say to myself I have also erred; when I see a lustful man I say to myself, so was I once; and in this way I feel kinship with everyone in the world and feel that I cannot be happy without the humblest of us being happy. It is in this sense that I want you to make the charkha the centre of your studies. Just as Prahlada saw Rama everywhere and Tulsidas could see nothing but Rama even in the image of Krishna, let all your learning be directed to realizing the implications of the charkha. Our science, our carpentry, our economics should all be utilized for making the charkha the prop and mainstay of our poorest. I know in Gujarat Vidyapith we have not yet succeeded in doing it, you are not doing it. I am not saying this in a spirit of complaint. I am simply pouring out the agony of my heart. May you all understand it.

The rest was an appeal for helping the Vidyapith and it evoked a hearty response from all present. Rs. 2,000 were promised and over Rs. 600 were collected on the spot.

Young India, 10-2-1927

23. *SPEECH AT INAUGURATION OF KHADI EXHIBITION, PATNA*

January 30, 1927

Mahatma Gandhi in declaring the exhibition[1] open said that it was a pity that there was felt the necessity of holding an exhibition of khadi. It was not a matter of congratulation at all, for generally exhibitions were held of such things only as were not popular with the people. There was no need felt of holding an exhibition of ordinary rice or wheat or even of foreign or mill-made cloth for there was hardly any corner in the country where the latter was not found in abundance. There was hardly any difference between foreign imported cloth or the mill-made cloth of the country. Both were equal in his eyes because in both cases the major portion of the money went to the rich and the pampered mill-owners and very little, indeed a miserably small amount, to the poor labourers. When he started khaddar work, the mill-owners of Ahmedabad, many of whom he counted as his friends, told him that it was all useless for instead of the people, as he wanted, they would be greatly benefited, for khadi would never be able to compete with them. In fact they produced a new kind of cloth made of the refuse of cotton just to kill khadi in competition. It was the mill-owners who killed swadeshi in Bengal by raising the prices of their cloth and also not unoften by palming off foreign productions in the name of swadeshi. They justly reminded him of the fact that their mill industry was not based on patriotism or love of people but existed solely as a business enterprise and was meant for giving as large a dividend to their shareholders as possible. But when later they came to understand that he was trying to achieve things quite different from what was sought to be done during the swadeshi agitation days, they began to appreciate his efforts. Proceeding, Mahatmaji exhorted the people not to use foreign or mill-made cloth. It was their dharma to go in for khadi and khadi alone. Their clothes should be made only in the villages as was the case only fifty years back. He wanted to revive the same good old days of charkha—hand-spinning and hand-weaving. Economists were of the opinion that Gandhi was trying to achieve an impossible thing. Some people also humorously observed that when Gandhi died there would be no dearth of fuel for burning his mortal frame, for he had made ample provision for the same beforehand in the shape of so many charkhas that he had got prepared. But all the same it was a fact that in the mill industry the poor labourers barely got a pice out of every rupee worth of things that they produced—it was never even one anna. Mahatmaji,

[1] Organized by the Bihar Branch of All-India Spinners' Association at Shrimati Radhika Sinha Institute Hall

proceeding, explained at length with reference to some charts the present economic condition of the people. He referred to the various estimates of the income of the people made by Dadabhai Naoroji, Lord Curzon and R. C. Dutt and said:

Look, how this long strip[1] of red representing the *per capita* income of U.S.A. compares with the little speck which represents that of India. Whereas the one is over Rs. 14 a day, the other is 1½ anna a day! Compare the incomes of other countries—England, France, Japan, which are respectively Rs. 7, 6, and 5 a day. And even this 1½ anna a day is the average. The actual income of the vast majority of our poor people would be still less, if you were to keep out of account the income of salaried ministers and executive councillors, of a few barristers and fewer millionaires. I ask you in all humility to suggest some way wherewith you can supplement this scanty income. I have been asking one and all but without avail. As a result of hard thinking and living contact with the millions during recent years I have suggested the charkha as the only means calculated to supplement this income. . . .

This[2] production means Rs. 30,000 distributed to 3,000 of the poor women of Bihar. Come with me to the khadi centres of Darbhanga and see the joy and happiness the charkha has brought to those Hindu and Mussalman women. If I cannot give work to more it is not my fault, but yours. If you do not care to purchase the products of their hands the work cannot progress. Every yard of khaddar you purchase means a few coppers in the hands of those women. A few coppers, and not more. But it means a few coppers where none was earned before. I saw the fallen women in Rajahmundry and Barisal. A young girl came and said to me, 'Gandhi, what can your charkha give us? The men who come to us pay us Rs. 5 to 10 for a few minutes!' I said to her the charkha could not give them that, but if they renounced the life of shame I could arrange to teach them spinning and weaving and help them to earn a decent living. As I listened to that girl my heart sank within me and I asked God why I was also not born a woman. But if I was not born a woman I can become a woman and it is for the women of India, a large number of whom do not get even an anna a day, that I am going about the country with my spinning-wheel and my begging bowl.[3]

[1] In the chart of daily income per head in different countries of the world prepared by the students of the Vidyapith at Patna

[2] Referring to the charts of production and sale of khadi

[3] This and the preceding paragraph are taken from *Young India*, 10-2-1927, and the one which follows is from *Navajivan*, 6-2-1927.

I cajole you for the sake of those sisters. I am not ashamed of cajoling even the Government. I want the co-operation of the Viceroy and the ministers for the khadi and charkha activities. Give me money out of your transferred departments, make your servants wear khadi, introduce charkhas in your schools, yourselves wear khadi.

The present was his third tour round the country. He thought there were few among educated Biharis who had come in as much intimate contact with the poor in the villages of this province as he. And after making a personal study of their miserable condition he had come to the conclusion that charkha alone could be the solution of their poverty. Some said that with non-co-operation khaddar too was dead. But that was not the case; on the contrary, it had made considerable progress. But he was not satisfied with the same. His aim was to provide food and occupation to the millions; they had not even reached the figure of lakhs. . .

Khadi was a common platform that he had created for both the officials and the non-officials, for the Hindus and the Mussalmans. But he could not help it if the Hindus thought that it was to benefit the Mussalmans inasmuch as the weavers were Mussalmans and if the Mussalmans thought that it was to benefit the Hindus, for the spinners were Hindu women. As a matter of fact both the communities were benefited for the weavers and spinners were both Hindus and Mussalmans. People also complained that khadi was coarse and rough. But he asked, would they refuse the bread prepared by their mother if it was coarse in preference to the fine biscuits of Delhi. He hoped not. He recommended the prize essay "Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving", by Prof. S. V. Puntambekar and Sjt. Varadachari for their careful perusal and concluded by earnestly appealing to all particularly to the educated and the rich—to take to charkha and khadi and thus create an atmosphere for it in the country. When once that was done there would be no need for any exhibition of the kind that he was going to open that evening. It behoved them to do something for the poor in the villages at whose expense they in towns and cities had been thriving so long.

The Searchlight, 2-2-1927

24. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 31, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters delivered in good time. The postal arrangements are extraordinarily good. Nothing has miscarried in spite of this incessant travelling.

We leave Bihar tonight not without regret on my part. Bihar has its own charms for me.

I must write a summary letter as there is much to write during the time I have.

You may take the following vow after calling together the chief friends there so that they may not be upset. Restrict yourself to three meals only the last not to be after 7 p.m. No ghee to be smeared on *bhakharis*[1], vegetables only plain boiled with or without salt. Milk unsweetened, no more than two vegetables at a time, no more than three fruits at a time, no limitation on drinks of water with lemon, honey, sugar, salt, soda. The vow to last till 20th March for the time being. This does not exclude anything taken for medicinal purposes. The whole is subject to alteration in the event of illness.

I think the above restrictions should answer the whole purpose. We must discuss the desirability of extending the period when we meet.[2]

No occasion to worry about feel[ing] over-healthy so long as you do not become so fat as to make you unfit for brisk work. There is no danger of that happening. But in any event the vow obviates the remotest risk.

I had taken a mental note of your judgment against gurukuls but did not intend to say anything about [it]. Criticism of everything one does not approve stifles independent judgment or its expression especially when that criticism comes from loved ones. But I am glad of your own correction. Only you will not unnecessarily agitate yourself about these things. Self-correction should result in exhilaration.[3]

[1] "*Rotis* prepared with ghee and salt." (Mirabehn)

[2] "As far as I remember I prolonged, with Bapu's permission, this food vow up to one year, after which simple food became a natural habit."

[3] "Bapu had refrained from criticizing something he had not approved of in a previous letter of mine."

No more can be written now as I must walk out to the station, three miles, just time enough to catch the train comfortably.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

Here are the chief places of pilgrimage. There are three per day.

2nd Gondia
3rd Wardha
4th Wun
5th Yeotmal, Berar
6-7 Akola

The other places not quite fixed, but for letters to reach me after 7th, unless I advise to the contrary, address Khadi Bhandar, Jalgaon, G.I.P. Rly.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5201. Courtesy: Mirabehn

25. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Monday, Posh Vad 13 [January 31, 1927][1]

DEAR SISTERS,

Monday has come round again. This time I have not yet received your letter. Today we are in Patna. It is very quiet here. The Vidyapith, so dear to Rajendra Babu, is located here. It is situated amid the fields on the bank of the Ganga. There are no buildings around. The scene is good on the whole. Owing to the annual function of the Vidyapith, teachers and boys have come from various places. All the Ashram buildings are, therefore, crowded.

I intend to add to your work and to that of the Ashram. The womenfolk of the workers here are more handicapped than our women. Some of them are desirous of coming there for a short time. I do not propose to stand in their way. On the contrary, I am encouraging them to go. I am sure if some of them came there, you would welcome them, and shoulder the responsibility. The idea in sending them there is that they may gain a little knowledge and learn spinning and carding. It is my hope that on their return they will work among the women here.

[1] Gandhiji was in Patna at the end of January 1927.

If any of you have anything to suggest in this matter, certainly do so. Check me if I am in too great a hurry. One who is in distress does not stop to weigh and consider. Regard me as such. I cannot bear to see the helpless state of these women. There, too, we are fairly helpless; but these people here are even more so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3637

26. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day [January 31, 1927][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Wire me when Rukhi is operated upon. Please also inform the doctor about her nervousness.

Herewith the other letters too from Mirabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7771. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

27. LETTER TO VITHTHALDAS V. JERAJANI

PATNA,
Monday [January 31, 1927]

BHAISHRI VITHTHALDAS,

I have your letter. About the sales I shall write in April in *Navajivan* and *Young India*. Ahmednagar District has been allotted the 16th; so, I think, I should reach Bombay before that. I do not yet have the detailed programme.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

3rd Wardha
4th Wun
5th Yeotmal
6-7 Akola

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9762

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 25-1-1927.

28. *MESSAGE TO "REVIEW OF NATIONS"*[1]

[Before *February 1, 1927*]

What message shall I send you save to say that my nationalism is intense internationalism? I am sick of the strife between nations or religions.

The Modern Review, February 1927

29. *LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI*

Tuesday [*February 1, 1927*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Herewith a letter from Mirabehn. I hope you have been making arrangements about Vijapur.

You are to submit to Sir Gangaram a statement about the programme and the accounts of our agricultural activities, so that he can offer us some advice. This should include the area and a map of our land, the nature of the soil, what crops it can grow, what use it is now put to and all that, and also the sources of our water supply.

The dairy expert should come about this time.

Please honour the *hundi*[3] that Jesukhlal will draw for stocking cotton or send him what he asks for. Narandas knows the limit to which you may go.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7759. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] Founded by Felix Valyi of 6, rue de Hollande, Geneva, Switzerland

[2] The addressee was reminded about the statement to Sir Gangaram in a letter dated February 7, 1927.

[3] Bill of exchange

30. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

CALCUTTA,
February 1, 1927

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

ONLY THOSE NECESSARY WILL REMAIN GONDIA OTHERS WARDHA.

GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Panchwen Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 63

31. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[Before *February 2, 1927*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I hope you have my earlier letter. Your father and I are trying our best to have you sent to the Ashram, and we hope to succeed. I have already written to your father-in-law. In the mean while you should try to cheer up your mother-in-law and serve her sincerely. Dharma tells us that the mother-in-law too is like the mother. The truth is that service, to whomsoever it may be rendered, ennobles the soul. Even while you stay with your parents-in-law, you should continue your studies, if you find the time. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3337

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 2-2-1927.

32. LETTER TO BRIJKISHORE PRASAD

Wednesday [February 2, 1927][1]

BHAI BRIJKISHORE PRASAD,

I was a little disappointed that Prabhavati was restrained. The few of us who wish to serve dharma and the country will have to shake off our fear of the Government and the community. I think Chi. Prabhavati can become a useful worker; she is an intelligent, industrious and virtuous woman, eager to serve. There is no end to the encouragement we could give to such a girl.

I spoke to her father-in-law. He said he would have had no objection to my taking Prabhavati to Arrah. He is even prepared to send her to the Ashram when her mother-in-law is better. I would now suggest that Prabhavati should be sent soon to the Ashram. As long as her mother-in-law needs her she should stay there to nurse her.

Why not go to Bombay or Calcutta and consult some doctor? You ought to improve your health. What is the sense in remaining a perpetual patient?

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3316

33. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[February 2, 1927][2]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I had a long talk with your father-in-law. He for one was agreeable to your going with me to Arrah, and also to your joining the Ashram. Now you may speak to your father. You should leave for the Ashram when your mother-in-law gets well. Try to take along with you Vidyavati and Chandramukhi, if your father permits.

[1] Gandhiji was in Arrah on January 28 and the letter seems to have been written thereafter.

[2] It appears that this letter was written on the same date as the preceding one to Brijkishore Prasad.

I have great hopes in you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3304

34. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO GONDIA,
Wednesday [*February 2, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I hope you have the envelope I sent you, stuffed with letters from Mirabehn. Herewith I am sending other letters. I hope you preserve them, do you not? You must be giving them to Kaka Saheb for reading; if not please do so.

I got the telegram about Rukhi's operation after I left Patna. It is excellent that it has been done. I hope to get the detailed report at Wardha.

Ask John to write to me. What is his Indian name? Would he like to be known by his Indian name or by his English name? Has Giriraj left any message?

From Manibehn's letter it appears that the mess is not being very well run, that vegetables dry up for days before they are cooked. Of course she has not seen this herself but some such reports have reached her. It is because of this and because I myself trust Shankar that I hope the reports may not be correct. However, I acquaint you even with this vague rumour because of my keen desire to see that the mess runs irreproachably.

The train will soon reach Gondia. I finish this during the final halt.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Champa that her jewels have come to Bombay. Now they will go to Sabarmati. Perhaps it would be wise not to let everyone read those letters of Mirabehn which contain some adverse comments. Use your own discretion.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7773. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] From the reference to Rukhi's operation and Gandhiji's journey to Gondia

35. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

GONDIA,
Wednesday [February 2, 1927]

. . . He does not appear to have been satisfied. But it was his duty to have come there. In all decency he had to stand by your side during the time of Rukhi's delicate condition. It has also struck me that he can no more carry on in the workshops there. He already has what the workshops could offer him. He needs must rise on his own. I have suggested to him to become your secretary and learn to do your work. His serviceability during Rukhi's illness is one thing. It is, however, a different matter what he should take up as a regular job. You may please think about it and write to me what you feel.

7.[2] For six months Vikram has not to study but only to put in manual work. He has to do spinning and weaving. You should therefore take from him such work as you think right. I like him. Besides he is related to Vasumatibehn, though he has come to us direct.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8694. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

36. SPEECH AT TUMSAR[3]

February 2, 1927

My action is my speech. . . . I did not speak at Gondia. I simply sold Rs. 500 worth of khadi and I was glad. Why was I glad, knowing as I did that when crores of rupees worth of cloth is dumped down in our country from abroad, Rs. 500 worth khadi is a drop in the ocean? I know the shame of my having to sell khadi and tempt you with cash-memos signed by myself. But what am I to do when you will not understand the value of such a simple thing as khadi?

Young India, 17-2-1927

[1] The earlier part of this letter is not available.
[2] As in the source
[3] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

37. *A.I.S.A. NEWS*

The A.I.S.A. has begun the year well. The number of members on the roll on the 20th January 1926 was A class 2,334, B class 415. The number on the same date this year was A class 1,458, B class 115 and juveniles 159. Out of the 1,458 members 1,212 are old members, whilst 246 are new. The number of members who regularly sent in their quota last year was 1,077, which means that this year we have already 135 more regular subscribers, besides the new members. Let those who failed to pay their quota last year send in three months' subscription and become fresh members for this year.

The Technical Department has begun examining the yarn of the members in right earnest, no less than 464 members' yarn having been examined up to now and result thereof intimated to them. The form of receipt for yarn will now contain the test, evenness and count of the yarn of the member last examined by the Technical Department.

Here are a few of the good yarn samples tested by the Technical Department:

		Test	Uniformity	Count
Sjt.	V. S. Dandekar, Banaras	94	94	30
,,	Velji Lakhamsi Nappu, Matunga, Bombay	94	96	25
,,	V. V. Jerajani, Bombay	87	96	13
,,	Govindbhai Patel, Gujarat	87	93	14
,,	Bhailal Bajibhai, Gujarat	86	92	10
,,	Parbhudas Saraiya, Gujarat	100	79	21

From bad to good, then to better and then to best should be the motto of every one of us. All agents have been circularized by the A.I.S.A. Council to send to the Technical Department pieces of four square yards of every variety of cloth manufactured at their depots along with a hank of yarn from which the cloth was woven, for the purpose of examining the quality of the cloth and cataloguing the different varieties made in the country. Only five centres have so far responded, and that too with information indifferently filled in. I hope there will be no more delay on the part of the rest and that those who have sent in-

complete information will complete it. Every piece must be accompanied by a label containing the following items of information:

1. Length of the whole piece
2. Width
3. Number of threads in warp and woof
4. Weight of a square yard
5. Cost price and sale price

Many people desire the Prize Essay on "Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving" to be sent them by V. P. P. Apart from the extra cost of registration, etc., it means a lot of inconvenience and delay. One V.P.P. was refused. The book will not now be sent by V.P.P. Let intending purchasers send M.O. for Re. 1 and 2½ annas to cover postage.

Young India, 3-2-1927

38. OUR HELPLESSNESS

So the fiat has gone forth that India is to send Indian soldiers to China, in reality to aid in suppressing China's bid for freedom, ostensibly to protect the foreigners. The Legislative Assembly had no voice in the matter. It had not even the power to express its academic opinion. The Viceroy considered it inexpedient for the Assembly to do so. That was enough to prevent the Assembly from voicing its feelings.

And yet it is as vital a matter as could be imagined for the members of the Assembly not merely to discuss but to direct India's foreign policy. Our helplessness becomes never so apparent as when Indian soldiers are shamelessly used to crush other people's freedom. Indeed, India is the key to the exploitation of the Asiatic and other non-European races of the earth. She is held under bondage not merely for the sake of her own exploitation but that of her neighbours near and distant.

No wonder the Viceroy was emphatic and unequivocal in his pronouncement that for any advance upon the so-called reforms, India had to wait on the British Parliament on bended knee. She is to expect nothing as of right. Historical events have given Britain the mastery over India and she means to retain it so long as she can. Every reform has to be subject to that one supreme condition.

Here then there is an outlook which no self-respecting Indian can accept. British mastery is the one thing that India cannot tolerate. It was to make this position absolutely clear that the Independents fought at Gauhati for unequivocal independence for the country. That it could not be had for the moment did not matter much to them. They wanted the nation to realize that goal and no other.

Men like me cling to their faith in human nature and expect to bend even the haughty English spirit, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. But whether it be Dominion status or any other, they do not want to be *under* the British Government; they want absolute equality. They, not the English Government, should be able to say what their soldiers will do, where they will go.

This real vital power is not to be had through working the reforms *now*. That power has to come from within and from the bottom. It is then possible to work any constitution. Today it is impossible to work any constitution with effect. We have not the internal capacity. We have not got the needed influence over the people. That influence can only come through real selfless service. So long as we fail to realize this central fact, every one of our activities must ultimately turn to nothingness.

Let not the impatient reader laugh when I mention the spinning-wheel in this connection. I hold that it is impossible for us to establish a living vital connection with the masses unless we will work for them, through them and in their midst, not as their patrons but as their servants.

Let the impatient reader know that these masses for whom he is called upon to work, in whose name he would like to speak, are underfed, underclothed and living for the most part in enforced idleness. Let the Viceregal embargo on the Chinese resolution and His Excellency's frank pronouncement about reforms open our eyes to the stern reality.

It is well that the Working Committee of the Congress has washed its hands clean of the immoral transaction which the impending departure of Indian soldiers for China is. Let the struggling Chinese know that our soldiers will go to China only because we are if possible more helpless than they. This is not the first time that Indian soldiers will go to China to suppress her freedom. Lowes Dickinson[1] by his immortal *Letters of John China-*

[1] 1862-1932; English essayist; author of *The Meaning of Good, Justice and Liberty, The European Anarchy, War: Its Nature, Cause and Cure*, etc.

man has shown us how Indian soldiers were taken to China to impose opium upon her. We know what the powers miscalled Christian have done in China. But no nation that is prepared to pay the price can be baulked of her freedom for ever. And it is well with China, as she seems to be prepared to pay the price required.

Young India, 3-2-1927

39. INSANITARY GAYA

I have no desire to advertise the insanitation of Gaya, a prince among the holy places of Hinduism. It was because my Hindu soul rebelled against the stinking cesspools I saw in a principal street of Gaya that I was obliged to draw pointed attention to it in my reply to the address of the Gaya Municipality[1]. I am aware that there are many holy places which are insanitary enough. But I do not remember having seen anything like what I saw in Gaya. It is possible that I have not been taken to the dirty places in other sacred places. But insanitation need not be weighed in golden scales. Gaya I am using merely as an example in order to draw the attention of all municipalities that sanitation of their cities must be their first care. This one thing must be above municipal politics, parties and intrigues. Just as it must be the care of every party in a municipality to keep its finance pure and above suspicion, so must it be the sacred duty of every party in a municipality to keep the sanitation of its city in perfect order and above suspicion. Every municipality should constitute itself a model school for teaching the science of sanitation. Of city sanitation we have not yet much knowledge. We do not mind what happens to our neighbours, so long as our own houses are in fair order. We do not know the use of city latrines. We do not know how to use our drains. It has to be admitted therefore that our municipalities have an arduous task before them in handling this great and important problem. But handled it must be whatever the difficulties. It becomes much more important in sacred cities which are visited by lakhs of people from year to year. There was no reason for the foul cesspools I noticed in Gaya. There is no reason why people should be allowed to dirty river banks. There are many things which municipalities can, if they will only treat the cities under their care as if they were their own houses, remedy without much difficulty or hindrance from the citizens.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXII, pp. 563-5.

But the difficulty comes from within. Municipal councillors are often indifferent and sometimes obstruct their own elected chairman. Sometimes they are absorbed in internal quarrels and neglect sanitation. It is high time that we developed a healthy sense of civic duty. In this matter we have much to learn from the West. People of the West are builders of big cities. They know the value of fresh air, clean water and clean surroundings. Any city that would attend to its sanitation in a proper spirit will add to both its health and wealth. Sacred cities ought to lead the way in this matter. They have opportunities which other cities do not possess. There is a great deal of wisdom in the English proverb "Cleanliness is next to godliness". Manu, Moses and Mahomed have laid down laws of sanitation suited to their times. These have to be elaborated in keeping with the modern requirements. It is enough to know from these ancient law-givers that they held cleanliness to be part of a truly religious life.

Young India, 3-2-1927

40. TEAR DOWN THE PURDAH

Whenever I have gone to Bengal, Bihar or the United Provinces, I have observed the *purdah* system more strictly followed than in the other Provinces. But when I addressed a meeting at Darbhanga late at night and amid calm surroundings free from noise and bustle and unmanageable crowds, I found in front of me men, but behind me and behind the screen were women of whose presence I knew nothing till my attention was drawn to it. The function was in connection with the laying of the foundation-stone of an orphanage, but I was called upon to address the ladies behind the *purdah*. The sight of the screen behind which my audience whose numbers I did not know was seated made me sad. It pained and humiliated me deeply. I thought of the wrong being done by men to the women of India by clinging to a barbarous custom which, whatever use it might have had when it was first introduced, had now become totally useless and was doing incalculable harm to the country. All the education that we have been receiving for the past 100 years seems to have produced but little impression upon us, for I note that the *purdah* is being retained even in educated households not because the educated men believe in it themselves but because they will not manfully resist the brutal custom and sweep it away at a stroke. I have the privilege of addressing hundreds of meetings of women, attended by thousands. The din and the noise created at these meetings

make it impossible to speak with any effect to the women who attend them. Nothing better is to be expected so long as they are caged and confined in their houses and little courtyards. When therefore they find themselves congregated in a big room and are expected all of a sudden to listen to someone, they do not know what to do with themselves or with the speaker. And when silence is restored it becomes difficult to interest them in many everyday topics, for they know nothing of them having been never allowed to breathe the fresh air of freedom. I know that this is a somewhat exaggerated picture. I am quite aware of the very high culture of these thousands of sisters whom I get the privilege of addressing. I know that they are capable of rising to the same height that men are capable of, and I know too that they do have occasions to go out. But this is not to be put down to the credit of the educated classes. The question is, why have they not gone further? Why do not our women enjoy the same freedom that men do? Why should they not be able to walk out and have fresh air?

Chastity is not a hot-house growth. It cannot be superimposed. It cannot be protected by the surrounding wall of the *purdah*. It must grow from within, and to be worth anything it must be capable of withstanding every unsought temptation. It must be as defiant as Sita's. It must be a very poor thing that cannot stand the gaze of men. Men, to be men, must be able to trust their womenfolk, even as the latter are compelled to trust them. Let us not live with one limb completely or partially paralysed. Rama would be nowhere without Sita, free and independent even as he was himself. But for robust independence Draupadi is perhaps a better example. Sita was gentleness incarnate. She was a delicate flower. Draupadi was a giant oak. She bent mighty Bhima himself to her imperious will. Bhima was terrible to every one, but he was a lamb before Draupadi. She stood in no need of protection from anyone of the Pandavas. By seeking today to interfere with the free growth of the womanhood of India we are interfering with the growth of free and independent-spirited men. What we are doing to our women and what we are doing to the untouchables recoils upon our heads with a force thousand times multiplied. It partly accounts for our[1] weakness, indecision, narrowness and helplessness. Let us then tear down the *purdah* with one mighty effort.

Young India, 3-2-1927

[1] The Souce has "own".

41. SPEECH AT CHANDA[1]

February 4, 1927

What am I to do with these garlands? This is no time to be going about with garlands on, this is no time either for taking milk and other things denied to the poor. How often have I wished that I could sacrifice even the milk and give it to the poor, starving women of the land! But I have desisted, for it would be self-immolation. However unwillingly, I have to take it, and keep myself alive, as long as God wills it, to serve them as best as I can. Pray therefore do not throw away money on garlands. For every rupee saved on these garlands you give 16 women one meal. Are not we ashamed to be deaf to the cry of the poor on whose toil we live, and from whose toil we draw our sustenance? If you cannot even wear khadi manufactured by them, you had better stop crying '*Lokamanyaki jai*'.[2] Show some of his spirit, do some of his work, show in your action a particle of his overflowing love for the poor and then take his name.

Young India, 17-2-1927

42. INTERVIEW TO SAKLATWALA[3]

YEOTMAL,
[February 5, 1927][4]

"Imperialism must be ended. Why should we not succeed when China, Russia, Mexico and other countries are getting success? Our voice will also be heard, if we work with them. We would do what we desire if we have the association of ten lakhs of workers. Differences there will be. Even Hindus and Muslims have a right to fight. Other countries enjoy independence even though they fight among themselves. We must declare that we want independence." This is the gist of the conversation Mr. Shapurji Saklatwala, M.P., had with Gandhiji at Yeotmal. . . .

The Communist M.P. believes khadi is not non-violent for it kills the livelihood of Lancashire labour. There is no unity in khaddar. How can

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] "Victory to Lokamanya"

[3] As reported by Mahadev Desai in *Navajivan*, 13-2-1927 and released by Free Press on the same date from Ahmedabad

[4] Gandhiji was in Yeotmal on this date.

we attain unity by spinning in the corner of houses? Unity can be achieved by working together in factories.

Gandhiji replied that what he said was being done. He said that he would realize the difficulties that beset the path if he stayed here. Gandhiji claimed that the united organized force which the M.P. talked of was being brought about by khaddar. Gandhiji asked him to travel with him for a few days and he (Gandhiji) would show him what was being brought about by khaddar. Weavers, spinners and dyers, etc., are being united by khadi.

In the end, Mr. Saklatwala humorously remarked that they will have to confine him (Gandhiji) even as the Sinn Feiners are confining their leaders, and they will have to tell him: "Lead us as we tell you."

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-2-1927

43. *LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL*

ON THE WAY TO AKOLA,
Sunday, February 6, 1927

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. You needs must improve your handwriting. The letters should be big and clear. It is not enough to write a good hand on special occasions. We should write well always, as Mahadev does.

You may attend Hariharbhai's classes for the present. If you make a habit of talking in Hindi you will soon pick it up. You will learn it soon enough if you have a liking for it.

I will write to you when I get a reply from Karachi.

Become an expert in every process connected with spinning. Do not leave out any one of them. In the course of my travels I realize every moment the country's need of a large number of spinning teachers from among women of character.

You had no right to read the letter to Manilal Kothari, but never mind if you have read it. Today no one is prepared to believe that a young Indian woman can have the strength to observe *brahmacharya*. I yearn for the day when you and other Ashram girls will have cured the people of their scepticism.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 51-2

44. LETTER TO ANANDI, MANI, TARA, CHANDAN

Sunday [February 6, 1927][1]

CHI. ANANDI, MANI, TARA, CHANDAN,

Well, I have no time to write to each of you individually. I am pleased to read the letters from all of you. All of you girls should improve your handwriting. Get used to writing in ink.

This paper with the feel of silk is a handmade product from Nepal. Tulsi Maherji had sent it to me. It comes in very large sheets. I have cut them into several pieces.

All of you girls should now form the habit of getting up early; it is cold no more.

Ask Hari-ichchha to write to me. She could not wait for a letter from me.

Today I shall be meeting Gomatibehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4922. Courtesy: Hari-ichchhabehn Kamdar

45. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[2]

[February 6, 1927][3]

. . . has come. But can one force another to accept something as his dharma? It binds him who voluntarily accepts it. We can only explain things.

Ramachandra has written to Revashankarbhai about the [water] lift. You can ask for Rs. 5,000. You should draw the rest of the amount on the Ashram [account]. If the lift proves its utility we would recover our initial investment. What is the position regarding the patent? Have you sent them a reply? . . .

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7774-A. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] Gomatibehn lived in Akola which Gandhiji visited on February 6, 1927.

[2] The opening and the concluding portions of the letter are not available.

[3] The letter is written on handmade silk-paper. Gandhiji mentions getting such paper from Tulsi Maher; *vide* the preceding item.

46. *SPEECH ON UNTOUCHABILITY, AKOLA*[1]

February 6, 1927

My views on untouchability are not the product of my Western education. I had formed them long before I went to England, and long before I studied the scriptures, and in an atmosphere which was by no means favourable to those views. For I was born in an orthodox Vaishnava family and yet ever since I reached the years of discretion I have firmly held my uncompromising views in the matter, which later comparative study of Hinduism and experience have only confirmed. How in face of the fact that no scriptural text mentions a fifth *varna*, and in face of the express injunction of the *Gita* to regard a Brahmin and a Bhangi as equals, we persist in maintaining this deep blot on Hinduism, I cannot understand. Regarding a Brahmin and a Bhangi as equals does not mean that you will not accord to a true Brahmin the reverence that is due to him, but that the Brahmin and the Bhangi are equally entitled to our service, that we accord to the Bhangi the same rights of sending his children to public schools, of visiting public temples, of the use of public wells, etc., on the same basis as these rights are enjoyed by any other Hindu. It is to the service of the untouchables that Shraddhanandji devoted the best part of his life. He lived and moved and had his being in the service of that suppressed class. What shall I say of the attitude that persists in holding up a wholly irreligious practice as religious? Let us therefore search ourselves and purge our hearts of all narrowness, let us realize that it is a just Nemesis that is punishing us in South Africa and that our treatment of our brethren is no less iniquitous than the white man's treatment of our countrymen in South Africa.

Young India, 17-2-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

47. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

February 7, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

This is written on handmade paper supplied from Nepal by Tulsi Maher. He is here again with us. This is Kishorelal's brother's home. His wife Gomati has been ill. She is still bedridden though there is no danger now. I see here several old faces. We leave here tomorrow morning. Here are the dates:

9 Bhusaval
10 Jalgaon
11 Chopda
12 Amalner
13-14 Dhulia

After this, again I do not know.

I have your letter about the vow. I do not mind your interpretation about the vegetables and fruit. Remember that a vow should not cover merely the minimum but should deal with the maximum. One would then strive always to be under and not near the border line. However the period is short so it does not much matter.

I have Prof. Ramdev's letter but today I have no time left for writing at length.

Yes, I am stronger than before. How long this will last, one does not know.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5202. Courtesy: Mirabehn

48. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

AKOLA,
February 7, 1927

MY DEAR BHRRR[1],

I was delighted to receive your note. Of course you had great success in Kathiawar. Ramdas told all about it.

Sohaila[2] certainly will have my blessings, if she and hers will behave themselves and wear khadi.

Here is the letter you want for Dr. Mehta. But must you go to Rangoon for the amount? Why can you not collect what you can locally and the rest may be collected without your going to Rangoon, seeing that you will allow Hindus to participate in the contributions? Of course if you go to Rangoon you will collect the small amount you mention in a few days.

With love,

Yours,
BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9557

49. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

AKOLA,
Silence Day [February 7, 1927]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got your letter and Radha's, and also other letters, acquainting me with Rukhi's progress. Now we need not worry on her account. We are crushed under the triple burden of the doctor's services as also those rendered by others. We ought not to think of repaying it. Even the thought of a token payment would be sinful. We can return their kindness only with a general awakening of our conscience. How can we make our young men and women see this? Had we been householders, even a single such illness would have consumed whatever Santok might have kept back. But there is no end to the illnesses around us. Why, even

[1] This was a form of greeting used by Gandhiji and Abbas Tyabji for each other.

[2] Addressee's daughter who was engaged to Mahomed Habib of Aligarh

amongst those whom Santok regards as her own there is no less misery. . . .[1]

I expect that separate accounts of all these matters are properly maintained; I mean they ought to be. I would say they are correctly maintained only if the rent and other items are correctly entered. I see you have been carrying rather a heavy burden. You alone know how it should or could be lightened. How are things going on at Vijapur? How much khadi has been lying with us? Hurry up with the statement about our agricultural activities, which is to be sent to Sir Gangaram. I have another letter from him.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Radha should not expect a separate letter for some time, but she should write to me all the same.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7774. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

50. *LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI*

[February 7, 1927][2]

. . .[3] serve us and others should attend to our comforts. Do we really deserve all this? Please think over this. It will be long before we really serve the world. At the moment we just accept what the world offers us, claiming to be social workers. Let us live up to the world's expectations of us. May I hope you will contribute your full mite to achieve this?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8839. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] As in the source

[2] From the reference to accepting services this appears to have been written about the same time as the preceding letter.

[3] The earlier part of this letter is not available.

51. *LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN*

AKOLA,
Silence Day [February 7, 1927]

SISTERS,

Today I am observing my day of silence in the midst of the members of our Ashram family. Kishorelalbhai, Gomatibehn, Nathji, Tulsi Maher and Tara—are not all these to be regarded as belonging to our Ashram? And who would regard Nanabhai, his wife and Sushila as outsiders? So do not expect me to write anything except about them this week.

Gomatibehn is still having a little fever, and is confined to bed. But she is cheerful; no one could say from her face that she was suffering from a long and serious illness. The reason for this cheerfulness is her faith. May we all have such faith!

Kishorelalbhai is getting on as usual. It cannot be said that he has acquired more strength. He even had fever and shivering last night. The fever lasted for a short time and subsided.

Whenever there is illness among the dear ones, Nathji cannot but be in their midst.

Nanabhai is perpetually ill. He is down with asthma but his face shows great calm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3638

52. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

AKOLA,
Silence Day [February 7, 1927]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have been getting your letters. You should improve your health a great deal. Today we are here in the midst of Gomatibehn, Kishorelalbhai and Tulsi Maher. And here too is Nathji.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Programme:
9 Bhusaval
10 Jalgaon
11 Chopda
12 Amalner
13-14 Dhulia

I do not know the subsequent programme.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6853

53. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

February 8, 1927

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I am glad you are by Devdas's side. His stay there is bound to do him good. You should have an operation without delay for Savitri's tonsillitis. You had become irregular about sending me weekly verses. I am glad you have now recommenced.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3198

54. *LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI*

ON THE TRAIN,
Tuesday [*February 8, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

Now I can let you have the news. I have almost settled the betrothal. But although you have given me the authority to finalize the matter I do not propose to exercise it.

Herewith a letter from Sushila; she is Tarabehn's elder sister. At 19 she is in good health though slightly hard of hearing. She knows Gujarati and Marathi. She also understands Hindi and a little English. She had her schooling up to the fourth form. I send with this Sushila's photograph. She is Kishorelalbhai's niece. Her parents are alive. Sushila is good at painting and also tries a little music. She plays on the harmonium. She is good at house work. She has herself written the letter without any help. She has also been told that you were almost engaged in South Africa. I would not have been able to find out a better match. Initially the suggestion came from Jamnalalji. Sushila's brother is to be operated upon. The marriage can be fixed for the 11th of March if he recovers [by then], and you can set sail immediately. If the operation is not successful marriage would be postponed on account of the mourning.

Now about you. I believe . . .[2] you have no disease such as syphilis or diabetes. I also told Sushila that . . .[3] if you ever go astray she should try to stop you and if you persist she should leave you.

Now along with your approval I want a solemn assurance from you that . . .[4] you shall honour Sushila's freedom; that you shall treat her as your companion, never as a slave; that you shall take as much care of her person as of your own; that you shall not force her to surrender to your passion, but that you shall take your pleasure only with her consent. I would advise you to set certain limits to your enjoyment.

[1] Gandhiji left Akola on February 8; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 7-2-1927.

[2] A few lines are omitted here.

[3] Two lines are omitted here.

[4] A line is omitted here.

While describing your good points I have let it be known that you are generous, guileless, and affectionate; that you have great love for the motherland and want to serve her.

I carry a grave responsibility. Here is a devout family. I would be glad if we become related. They have left everything to me. You must never deceive me. I would be mortally hurt if Sushila suffered the least unhappiness. She has impressed me as an innocent girl true to her name[1].

You know my attitude towards women. Men have not been treating them well. I have proposed this alliance assuming you to be capable of coming up to my ideals.

Now if you are agreeable to this engagement, wire to me and write a detailed letter. If you do not approve of this match or if you cannot accept the conditions I have laid down, wire to me: "Unable accept"[2], and if you would say 'Yes', then wire, "Approve match, can satisfy your test".[3]

Write to me at length. Here is my address: 10th Jalgaon; 11th Jalgaon; 12th Chopda; 13th, 14th and 15th Dhulia.

With the fear of God in your heart, write to me only the truth. May God bless you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9124. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

55. SPEECH AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, KHAMGAON

February 8, 1927

The reason why I have taken the trouble to carry out this examination[4] is that I have heard much praise of you, and what I am saying now is not to criticize you, but because I appreciate your effort and wish to help you. I must inform you that I am not satisfied if this is the standard of the most brilliant boy of the school. I am not satisfied either with his pronunciation or with the translation. English pronunciations were also bad. Only teachers who can teach correct pronunciation, whether of Sanskrit or English, should be employed. If such teachers are not available, then we should stop teaching. But we have forsaken satyagraha and

[1] *Sushila* literally means 'of virtuous character'.

[2] & [3] The source has these words in English.

[4] The brightest of the pupils was examined in English, Sanskrit and charkha by Gandhiji.

so plan our work to please the people anyhow. Let us follow truth in our system of education too. I will now suggest a little modification in your attitude to the charkha.[1]

I see that the charkha has a place on your programme, but it is one out of the four or five things you teach here. Now I want you to understand that the charkha has a place all its own, for reasons that should be obvious to you. For charkha is not one of the professions that you teach. A profession is for earning a livelihood, and if charkha was to be taught as a profession it should have no place on your syllabus. But it has a special purpose. When you put it in line with carpentry, clay-modelling, etc., you are guilty of a confusion of thought. Charkha is an instrument of service. In a national school therefore where the nation expects us to train national servants, the scheme of studies will centre round the charkha. It is a science in itself and it is a science which gives us a knowledge of the means of ameliorating the condition of the masses.

Devotion to a cause is no longer a strong point in our life. A true *brahmachari* is one who is devoted to his ideal and single-minded in his pursuit of the Brahman. If you at all want to give a place to the charkha, then it ought to have a special place. The distinctive quality of our national schools should be that we treat them as a great yajna and should train ourselves to run them accordingly. You must always think how much the knowledge of English helps in the propagation of the charkha, what support the *Gita* gives to the charkha, and what improvement you can effect in it if you learn carpentry and smithy.[2]

Do you know that we have not a national institution where mechanical engineering is taught and where good spindles are made? If therefore you learn mechanics, concentrate on learning how to make a true spindle and how to mend a wrong one. You should be able to tell the circumference of an ideal wheel, the distance between the axle and the poles, the number of revolutions of your spindle, etc. A carpenter in a national school will not have as his ambition the making of an ideal cabinet, but of an ideal charkha. In short, you should study the charkha scientifically and with religious zeal, i.e., with a view to making it the mightiest lever of the nation's salvation.

Young India, 17-2-1927

[1] & [2] These paragraphs are taken from *Navajivan*, 20-2-1927.

56. *SPEECH ON UNTOUCHABILITY, KHAMGAON*[1]

February 8, 1927

If I could think of anything that is untouchable it is foreign clothes. Anything that is prejudicial to the welfare of the nation is untouchable. Anything that is calculated to do the nation a disservice is untouchable. Liquor therefore is untouchable, foreign cloth is untouchable, but no human being is untouchable, and I regard it as fiendish or satanic to regard a fifth of the land as untouchable.

Young India, 17-2-1927

57. *SPEECH ON TILAK SWARAJ FUND, PACHORA*

February 8, 1927

Mahatmaji addressed the meeting emphasizing the need for khaddar and the removal of untouchability. Some questions were put to him and he answered them. The important question was as to how the one crore of rupees collected for the Tilak Swaraj Fund had been spent.

In replying to this question at length, Mahatmaji invited the curious to study the audit accounts published by the All-India Congress Committee. Every pie had been properly accounted for. Did they distrust the honesty of the treasurers like Seth Revashanker Jagjivan Zaveri and Seth Jamnalal Bajaj? The fact was that some people had given their contributions specially earmarked for certain purposes and they were being spent for them. For example, Seth Revashankerbhai had himself given Rs. 40,000 for educational purposes in Kathiawar. A gentleman in Bombay had given two to three lakhs for the removal of untouchability and they were being properly used. Both the treasurers as well as Mr. Shankerlal Banker, the Secretary of the All-India Spinners' Association, had given magnificent donations and it was not likely that they would be careless in the management of the funds. Capable business man as every one of them was, he was, however, ready to admit that there were some losses in some cases, but the total could not in any case exceed Rs. 50,000. They were due to the inevitable risk that every business man has to face. In Bihar, for instance, khadi was sold on credit to a number of people who had failed to satisfy the obligations. In Andhra, good Konda Venkatappayya was imposed upon by certain people. He had dis-

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

bursed certain amounts, which could not be readily realized. He had put undue trust in them and they had deceived him. Everyone knew that he had not taken a single pie for himself. Then there were cases of loss, which the greatest carefulness on one's part does not always succeed in avoiding. Recently Sjt. Mahadev Desai, who had been in the service for ten years, now as a trusted "hamal" (coolie) lost Rs. 400 at Bhandara. Could he ask him to repay the amount? He was bound to enter it in the accounts as being lost, though Mahadev Desai himself was looking forward to make good the loss as soon as possible.

These things were bound to happen in the regular course of business and he would even warn the audience that on rare occasions there might be even frauds. But, knowing all these things, if they thought that good work was being done, they might give whatever they could. He for himself was bound to trust the workers, whom the people trusted. Sjt. Dastane, for instance, was their worker. If he commanded their trust, why should Gandhiji distrust him? Mahatmaji assured them that every pie would be credited and accounted for and every loss accurately shown.

Knowing all these things, if they wanted to subscribe to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, which is the same as the Khaddar Fund, let them subscribe; and he assured them that whatever they gave would be carefully spent and accounted for in the best manner possible.

The Hindu, 12-2-1927

58. *BE IN TIME*

The eventful month of April will be soon on us with its memories of the birth of the nation accompanied by unparalleled rejoicings in which lakhs upon lakhs of people took part and which showed the possibilities of what the nation, if it could only act with one mind, could do. It is a month which showed also what haughty, revengeful and merciless Imperialism could do to save itself. The 6th and the 13th of April[1] are never-to-be-forgotten days in the life of the nation. Since then the nation has been struggling not to return evil for evil, not to act in a spirit of retaliation, but to use for self-purification the mingled crimson stream that flowed in Jallianwala. The nation has been struggling to express itself in a non-violent spirit expressed by the spinning-wheel and khadi, the removal of untouchability and solidarity of the different sects and creeds. It is clear, however, that khadi is the only thing in which the whole nation can take part.

[1] 1919

If we want to act non-violently, we must act constructively, patiently and with quiet and quenchless confidence in ourselves and in our method. We must evolve unity, strength and iron discipline. We must learn to give effect to our views in spite of the vast odds against us. Let us realize that the British rule is imposed upon us because British commerce is forced upon us. If we could but purify British commerce, we would purify the British connection. Our commercial transactions with the British as with the world should be on our terms and should therefore be mutually beneficial and absolutely voluntary. But Lancashire cloth is a symbol of our helpless exploitation, whereas khadi is the symbol of self-help, self-reliance and freedom, not merely of individuals or groups, sects or clans, but of the whole nation. It is a movement in which the prince and the pauper, men and women, boys and girls, Hindus and Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis and Jews, Englishmen, Americans and Japanese, if they wish well to India and get rid of the spirit of exploitation, can also take part. Thus it is a unique movement. It is good not merely for some, not merely for the vast majority, but it is good for all. We may do many other and many more things during the forthcoming National Week. But let us at least organize khadi. Here are the ways:

1. We can, every one of us, buy as much khadi as we can.
2. We can sell as much khadi as we can.
3. We can spin as much yarn as we can.
4. We can give as much as we can to the All-India Spinners' Association and collect from others.
5. Lastly, if we have the will and the opportunity, we can dedicate ourselves wholly to khadi work.

As I write this, the question arises in my own mind: 'But what about the immediate present, what about the Bengal detenus who are pining away in their prison-cells without any knowledge of charges against them, without any trial and without knowing how long they are to be detained?' My answer however is quite clear. If I could think of any other more expeditious method of setting them free, I would adopt it and suggest it today; but there is not. Slow, as this may seem, it is, in my humble opinion, the surest and the quickest method. Let those therefore who have belief in khadi or who have no belief in anything else, do their best bit during the National Week. A true soldier does not argue as he marches how success is going to be ultimately achieved. But he is confident that if he only plays his humble part well, somehow or other the battle will be won. It is in that spirit that

every one of us should act. It is not given to us to know the future. But it is given to every one of us to know how to do our own part well. Let us then do that which we know is possible for us if we only will.

Young India, 10-2-1927

59. NATIONAL LANGUAGE

In reply to my innocent paragraph about the evil habit of using English at our public meetings, a habit happily growing less day by day, a correspondent writes:[1]

> *The Hindu* of 28th January quotes *in extenso* your article[2] in *Young India* suggesting that in your proposed tour to the Southern Presidency, any address that may be presented to you should be in the vernacular of the place. You suggest also that a Hindi translation of the address should be supplied for your benefit. I observe further that you think that the time has come when South India should dispense with English for large public meetings. According to you, it is the English-speaking leaders who are blocking the way to our rapid progress among the masses by their refusal to learn Hindi. But the truth seems to be that, had it not been for this language, there would have been no active political life in India as we have it today. . . .
>
> Just as you say it would be an insult to inflict English on an audience composed of colliery workmen, I contend that to inflict any other language but English on an audience composed of people collected from various parts of India will be an affront to the latter. You will remember that the President[3] of this year's Congress was in the first instance called upon to speak in Hindi. It was only his rare courage and his rarer wit that saved him from what looked to be a very embarrassing situation. Supposing the President addressed that body in his own vernacular, how many in the audience would have understood him? Or for the matter of that, how many of the delegates assembled would have sat through the whole speech? . . . So long therefore as a common Indian language suitable to India and Burma is not agreed upon, English is bound to be and will be the only medium of communication among the Indian people. Instead of therefore setting your face against the use of the English language, and until such time as a common language is evolved for India, a man situated in your position should

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XXXII, pp. 580-1.
[3] S. Srinivasa Iyengar

> not add to the existing difficulties of the people by calling upon them to learn altogether a different language. . . .
>
> You remark in your article that it would be difficult to approach the masses if English is used as the medium. I quite agree with you there. But the masses should in the first instance be approached by people belonging to themselves and who live in their midst. It is, of course, understood that when approaching them their own language will be used. . . .

I publish the letter because it reflects an attitude with which one has to reckon. The correspondent in his eagerness to defend his own laziness, for it is difficult otherwise to characterize his mentality, has missed the following fundamental facts: English is known hardly to one per cent of the population. It will never be learnt by the masses and we have to reckon daily more and more with the masses in all our political transactions. The Congress every year has delegates and visitors the majority of whom do not know and understand English, and when it becomes a thoroughly democratic body, whose delegates are scavengers, cobblers, farmers, washermen, tailors and such others, there will be very few to know English. As against hardly one per cent of the total population knowing English, over 60 per cent of the total population of India at the present moment understand the ordinary rustic Hindustani. For an Indian it is any day infinitely easier to learn Hindustani than English. These are the facts, but the correspondent has overlooked them.

Moreover, in his zeal to make English the official language of the Congress, the correspondent has forgotten the agitation that has been going on in the Congress ever since its inception for a wider recognition of Hindustani as the common medium and that there is now already a resolution of the Congress making Hindustani the common medium. The correspondent seems to think that I decry the use of even learning English, which I have never done. That the English-speaking Indians have rendered immense service to the country nobody can deny, but unfortunately it is equally undeniable that further progress is being blocked by us English-speaking Indians refusing to learn the language of the masses and to work amongst them in accordance with methods best suited to them. The instance given by the correspondent of Mr. Chen is beside the point. I do not know what he is doing, but I do know that he is not speaking to the Chinese masses through English. And all I have claimed is that at our mixed moss meetings where the language of the province will not be under-

stood by all, if any other language is to be adopted, it must be Hindustani. Surely, it is a proposition which does not admit of any challenge.

Young India, 10-2-1927

60. SIR HABIBULLAH DEPUTATION

I tender heartiest welcome to Sir Habibullah Deputation on its return home. The public have not yet sufficient knowledge for forming a definite opinion about the results of the Deputation.[1] One thing is however certain that they have by their tact, ability and cohesion contributed not a little to the peaceful atmosphere that reigned supreme whilst the Round Table Conference was going on. One can only hope that the atmosphere will be reflected in the result of their deliberations. Not much importance need be attached to the cablegram from South Africa attributing the opinion on the part of a section of the Indian settlers, rejecting the conclusions of the Round Table Conference. It is as yet too early. The opinion can only be based upon conjecture, for nobody knows what the conclusions are. We are therefore bound to suspend judgment till we have the full text before us of the agreement said to have been arrived at between the parties. The ever-vigilant Mr. Andrews is there to watch Indian interests.

In this connection an Indian settler sends me the following appropriate reflections on the deliberations:[2]

> Recent messages from South Africa through Reuter's agency and Mr. C. F. Andrews suggest that with the enhanced status acquired by the Union of South Africa. . . she has begun to view the Indian question. . . in a more generous spirit. . . .
>
> The Round Table Conference too according to the Hon. Mr. Sastri[3] has terminated successfully and Mr. Sastri has expressed his thorough satisfaction with the agreement arrived at between the Union and the Indian Government delegates. . . . We can only wish that his high hopes may be fulfilled. Mr. Sastri has further advised the Indian settlers: "If you, our people from India, play the game, it will not be long before you get your due. . . even in the measure that you expect." Mr. Sastri has thus given the Indian settlers the hope that they

[1] *Vide* "Honourable Compromise", 24-2-1927.
[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[3] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

would even be granted full civic rights. Whether Indians are given full civic rights or not, even if the present policy of persecuting and driving Indians from pillar to post is abandoned and they are allowed to earn an honest livelihood undisturbed and unmolested,—the labours of the Conference will not have been in vain.

It were well to give the advice to play the game to the Union[1] Government. Even while we are given the hope of a satisfactory settlement of the Indian question and while we are being told that a change of heart has taken place, we find that the policy of depriving Indians of their means of livelihood and ousting them is being persistently pursued by the Provincial Governments with the sanction of the Union Government.

The Town Council of Pietermaritzburg is clearing what it has chosen to term the European locality of every single Indian trader by refusing to grant him a renewal of his licence. Many old established firms have thus already had to close down their businesses in those places without any compensation whatsoever. From a report published in *Indian Opinion* dated December 31, we find that several tailors, shoemakers and barbers who were carrying on their respective occupations for the last ten, fifteen and twenty years have been refused licences on the only ground that they were Indians, and on appeal the decision of the Licensing Officer was upheld by the Town Council in every case. That this should happen just when the Conference was deliberating is not a little surprising and it is a glaring illustration of who has not been playing the game.

Young India, 10-2-1927

61. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Thursday, February 10, 1927

CHI. MANI,

I have two letters from you. You have done well to begin learning Hindi. Whatever you do, you should preserve your health, and then I shall be free from anxiety.

Never spoil your handwriting. It does not matter if you have to spend more time on writing. Soon you will be able to write a good hand fast.

The slivers are very good indeed. I wish that you take a first in every single process connected with cotton. You will be most

[1] The source has "Indian", a misprint. *Young India*, 17-2-1927, published this correction.

useful to me as a spinning teacher in girls' schools, and later on as a welfare worker for poor women if your health permits. There is no end to the work to be done among women, but this can be done only to a limited extent by men.

Let me know everything that is wrong with the [Ashram] kitchen, and gently draw Sankaran's attention to it. You may even demonstrate the right method of doing things for a couple of days, but you must not get mixed up with it every day. You have to learn to live with others. I shall be very pleased when I can place you anywhere without hesitation as I can place Mahadev or Devdas for instance. I shall be satisfied when you do not hurt anyone's feelings or feel hurt yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 52-3

62. *LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

Thursday [February 10, 1927][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Tulsi Maherji tells me that I should let you know my opinion about [supplying] cotton to him, and that you propose to act accordingly. I am on my way to the station and will therefore write only this.

I think we should make up the deficit by drawing on the Charkha Sangh or from the Ashram. If you have no objection to drawing on the Charkha Sangh and obtaining the Council's sanction later, you may do so. Or else debit it to the Ashram account and let him have the cotton.

He has Rs. 300. He wants to have a wagonload of cotton packed in gunny bags. You may let him have that much if it would not cost more than Rs. 800, over and above the Rs. 300.

I would think it advisable to send less cotton if there could be a saving on railway freight. He has asked for 50 Bengali maunds presuming that transport charges up to Raxaul will be the same for 50 maunds as for 25. If it is so it appears advisable to send 50 maunds. Now if I have left anything unsaid

[1] From the reference to Tulsi Maher who was with Gandhiji on February 7; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn" 7-2-1927.

you should do as you think fit. Whatever you think may be considered as my opinion.

When you go to Bombay take with you my things such as books, clothes, etc. On reaching there get yourself promptly operated upon if the doctor so advises.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2883

63. SPEECH AT JALGAON[1]

February 10, 1927

One of the special features of the tour was the auctioning of the caskets containing addresses at the meetings where they were given. The beginning was made at Jalgaon and the process was continued until Dhulia. Gandhiji said:

You must know, friends, that excepting things which have a special artistic value and which I can hand over to Prof. Malkani[2] who is collecting such things at the Gujarat Vidyapith, I cannot afford to carry these caskets with me. For one thing I carry no steel trunks with me, nor have I any provision at the Ashram to keep them. The only course left for me therefore is to sell them. Don't you think that in doing so I am in any way disregarding or belittling the love with which they are being given. On the contrary, I propose to return the love in the best manner I can, and that is by converting the caskets into money for the work which is nearest my heart and for which you are showering your love on me.

The sentiment was appreciated everywhere, with the result that at a village like Shahade a trifling casket fetched as much as Rs. 300, and at Dondaiche the plate and other things fetched over Rs. 200.

Young India, 24-2-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] N. R. Malkani

64. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

DHULIA,
Friday [February 11, 1927][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. The Parishad's stars, it appears, are not favourable. We might therefore have to make some [propitiatory] sacrifice. We have not yet been able to get a site for setting up the pandal; surely we cannot afford to be so dependent. Why can we not hold the convention in some private premises? Why not at Umarsheth's or some other farm? Why not at Ranavav? But a player always sees more than an onlooker. It is no use my arriving at any decision when I am so far away. Please do whatever you think proper. Devchandbhai asks for some dates during April or May. But it cannot be done. The position at the moment is that a date once cancelled is finally cancelled.

From April to July all days are engaged. A few days in August are free. After that I shall be free only in early December. I shall certainly be at the Ashram in the beginning of March. We shall meet then.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Now up to the 14th write to me at Dhulia.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2831. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

65. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

Saturday [February 12, 1927][2]

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

I am not surprised that you faced the operation with great courage. I would have been surprised to see you break down. I have always found you full of courage. May it endure for ever. Get well soon and after that observe the whole regimen strictly

[1] It appears that the letter was written before Gandhiji reached Dhulia on February 13.

[2] The addressee was operated upon on February 11.

and never fall ill. I am in need of many women who are strong in both body and mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2887

66. *SPEECH ON KHADI, AMALNER*[1]

February 12, 1927

At Amalner for instance a doubt was expressed as to the utility of carrying the message of khaddar to a mill area like that place. "There are 2,000 labourers here and they form the bulk of the population. Do you expect them to wear khadi? Do you expect the mill-owners to wear khadi?"

Gandhiji gave a lengthy reply.

It is a question that you may well ask, and yet should not need to ask at this time of the day. Truth has to be repeated a million times if it is not understood by all. If only a single expression of truth was sufficient everyone should have been a believer in God by now. The fact is that the truth that God is one has a million times been told, but the hearts of only a few have been able to receive it.

The 330 rupees that the labourers have contributed to the purse are for me worth their weight in gold. But it is not for the first time that labourers are giving concrete expression to their sympathy. Even the mill-owners have done so and will do so in the conviction that they are helping a good cause, and the labourers are doing so because of their sympathy for a fellow-labourer like myself. But an understanding of one's duty and the observance thereof are different things. If they went together we should have *Ramarajya*. There are for instance those who know the value of *brahmacharya* but who cannot observe it. Even so there are those who appreciate the message of khadi but who are not able to conquer their love of ease and comfort and exclusively wear khadi. Many come and tell me: 'We value your message, but show us the way to carry it out.' And as honest conviction is bound to be followed by practice sooner or later this attitude fills me with more hope. You may be employing 2,000 labourers here but do not forget that you tear them from the soil, do not forget that

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

your mills can provide only a handful with labour, and can never find employment for the millions who must be rooted to the soil and who want more work. The question has been before the Royal Commission of Agriculture, the question is before the Viceroy and I challenge anyone to find a better solution than the one I have placed before the country. Dr. Roy[1] could not carry his chemical works to the famine areas in Bogra and Khulna; he had to fall back on the spinning-wheels. Let not your ambition be to concentrate thousands of spindles in a mill, but to convert every home into a spinning mill.

'Do I seek to destroy the mill industry?' I have often been asked. If I did I should not have pressed for the abolition of the excise duty. I want the mill industry to prosper—only I do not want it to prosper at the expense of the country. On the contrary if the interests of the country demand that the industry should go, I should let it go without the slightest compunction. The mill-owners who support me understand my attitude and many want this movement to prosper, even if its prosperity should mean their loss.

And you ask how those who produce mill cloth may wear anything else. Do you know that in Manchester the manufacturers do not wear their own products? You need not mind your inability to use cloth produced by your own mills. The good Duchess of Sutherland saw the miserable plight of the poor islanders of Hebrides and placed spinning-wheels and looms at their disposal. The citizens of Manchester, including mill-owners, do wear the hand-spun stuffs prepared by the Hebrides people, even at three times the cost of the mill stuff.

Do not hanker after cheapness and fineness. If you want cheap and fine stuffs you must spin fine yarn as the late Jogesh Chatterji did or you must spend more money for it. Those who talk of swaraj cannot have both cheapness and fineness. Think of the sacrifices that Lokamanya made and expected of you. Think of the sacrifices all fighters have to make. In Queen Elizabeth's time heavy duties were imposed on foreign stuffs and heavy penalties were prescribed for the purchase of Holland laces. Am I asking for much when I ask you to remember your poor and to purchase their khadi? Do not say you will maintain the poor on charity. Only two classes of people are entitled to charity and no one else—the Brahmin who possesses nothing and whose business it is to spread holy learning, and the cripple and the blind. But at

[1] P. C. Ray

Jagannath Puri the iniquitous system of giving doles to the able-bodied idle is going on to our eternal shame and humiliation, and it is to wipe out that shame that I am going about with the message of charkha up and down the whole country.

Young India, 24-2-1927

67. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

DONDAICHE,
Sunday [February 13, 1927][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Today is Sunday morning before prayer whilst the others are getting up.

Here is the further itinerary.

I have your latest letter.

I forgot to tell you how glad I was that Father and others were coming nearer to you. It must be the natural result as you have for them nothing but pure affection daily growing purer. Knowing affection grows purer if also more detached.

I understand the changes in your vow. They are quite all right.

No more today.

Yours,
BAPU

15th	February	Dhulia
16th	,,	Nasik
17th	,,	Ahmednagar
18th	,,	Kurduwadi, Dist. Sholapur
19th	,,	
20th	,,	Sholapur
21st	,,	
22nd	,,	Gulbarga
23rd	,,	Pandharpur, Dist. Sholapur

24th	February	Satara
25th	,,	Belgaum
26th	,,	Vengurla, Dist. Ratnagiri
27th	,,	
28th	,,	Ratnagiri
1st	March	Chiplun, Dist. Ratnagiri
2nd	,,	Mahad, Dist. Kolaba
3rd	,,	Bombay

From the original: C. W. 5203. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] According to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" (*Young India*, 24-2-1927) Gandhiji was at Dondaiche on February 12; Sunday was February 13.

68. LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

DHULIA,
February 13, 1927

MY DEAR KSHITISH BABU,

I have your two letters redirected to me at Dhulia. I am glad that Anil is better and entirely out of danger. I send you a copy of my itinerary. Please continue to advise me upon his progress.

I have just learnt that Tarini Babu has left Wardha. I am myself more anxious about him than Anil because Tarini Babu's disease has made a home in his body whereas Anil's was a temporary crisis. Tarini Babu therefore requires the best attention possible. I suggest your taking him to Dr. Bidhan Roy or Sir Nilaratan, if necessary, with a note from Sir P. C. Roy. We must not hesitate to take the best advice available if we are to save him.

The samples sent by you have not been forwarded to me. I shall be writing to the people at Jalgaon about it.

I value the note you have sent me about Mr. Chatterjee. I am going to make use of it for *Young India*.[1] Please give my respectful condolences to the family of the deceased.

I hope you and other members are keeping well and that the work at Sodepur is progressing. I know that the whole brunt now falls upon your shoulders, but thank God they are broad enough to bear it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1

SJT. KSHITISH BABU
170, BOW BAZAR STREET
CALCUTTA

[ENCLOSURE]

Programme

Upto 15th	Dhulia	19th	
16th-17th	Ahmednagar	20th	Sholapur
18th	Kurduwadi, Dist. Sholapur	21st	

[1] *Vide* "A Great Spinner", 17-2-1927.

22nd	Gulbarga, Nizam State	27th	Ratnagiri
		28th	,,
23rd	Pandharpur, Dist. Sholapur	1-3-27	Chiplun Dits. Ratnagiri
24th	Satara	2-3-27	Mahad, Dist. Kolaba
25th	Belgaum		
26th	Vengurla, Dist. Ratnagiri	3-3-27	Bombay

From a photostat: G.N. 8922

69. *LETTER TO B. F. MADON*

DHULIA,
February 13, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your illuminating letter. Everything coming from you commands my attention because I like your straightforward and popular exposition of a subject which has been [made] unnecessarily abstruse by economists. I am taking the liberty in anticipation of your permission of sending your letter to Prof. Wadia so that he may understand and appreciate your viewpoint. I would love to constitute myself a bridge over the gulf that, without cause as it seems to me, separates economists and that makes it difficult for a layman to study this very important subject. If all the principal economists of our country will agree on the fundamentals and issue a brief, reasoned joint statement, it will prove very useful to students like me who have opportunities of educating the popular mind.

What is this thunderbolt that Mr. Shroff has hurled in our midst? It is occasionally that I get a peep at the newspapers. Whenever therefore you get a moment and have anything to pass on to a busy man like me, please do not hesitate. For, though I am saying nothing in the Press, I am watching everything with an absolutely open mind.

From a photostat: S.N. 11777-A

70. LETTER TO P. A. WADIA

DHULIA,
February 13, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I send you Mr. Madon's letter and a copy of my reply[1] to him. These speak for themselves. I therefore add nothing beyond saying that I know that I can implicitly rely upon your doing everything possible to put this controversy[2] on a high and moral level.

I send you my itinerary up to the end of the month so that in the event of your wanting to say to me anything urgently you can put yourself in direct touch with me without the intervention of my permanent address.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1 + 1
PROF. P. A. WADIA
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 11777

71. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN MASHRUWALA

Sunday [February 13, 1927][3]

CHI. SUSHILA,

Herewith the telegram I have from Manilal, and also a copy of the letter[4] I had written to him; so you will now understand what I expect from both of you. God alone would know how fortunate you are but Manilal, I think, has certainly been lucky in getting you.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] The ratio controversy; *vide* also "Letter to Purushottamdas Thakurdas", 22-2-1927 and "Letter to B. F. Madon", 22-2-1927.
[3] Inferred from the contents
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 8-2-1927.

Get used to writing in ink. Try to improve your Gujarati as much as possible. Write to me if you get the time. Remember you can always write to me frankly.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My tour programme can be had from Nanabhai.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1122. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

72. *LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA*

[*February 13, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I got your letter at Jalgaon. Please go through the telegram from Manilal, which I got at Amalner, a copy of my letter to him and my letter[2] to Sushila and then pass them on to Chi. Sushila.

Now that Chi. Shanti is not to be operated upon for the time being, it would suit me if the marriage is solemnized at an early date and then the eight days of Holi[3] will not come in the way. I am likely to reach Sabarmati on the 6th which will be *Phagan Sud* 3. I would suggest we discontinue consulting an astrologer for choosing a date. For an auspicious thing the sooner the better. But in these matters I would not insist on my own views.

I can appreciate your wish to have Akola as the venue. All my tour dates are fixed. Only this change could be made: Since the Kathiawar [Political] Conference has been postponed I am free from the 4th to the 8th; on the 4th I reach Bombay. From Bombay I can straight away come up to Akola alongwith Manilal. Thus we can have the marriage on the 6th when I reach there and having spent there Monday the 7th, my silence day, I can leave for Ahmedabad. I must reach Ahmedabad by the 10th at the latest. I would like to put you to the minimum inconvenience. If you would have the date some time before the 6th that could be done if the marriage is performed wherever I happen to be. The other alternative is that you should perform the ceremony without my being present. You would all like me to

[1] Inferred from the contents
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Which are considered inauspicious

be there. I know Ba would desire it, so would Manilal. But I do not consider my presence indispensable. If you agree to this and if you can find out a date that suits you and falls before March 11 you can have a day of your choice.

I do not regard marriage as always indispensable. When it becomes indispensable it could only be a religious rite which may be performed with or without the presence of elders. And it could be done any time. This is why I do not insist on my being there. I importune you for an early date because Manilal's work in Natal suffers, and I want to send him off at the earliest opportunity.

Please consider all this and fix any day that suits you, and, if possible, send me a wire.

Here is my tour programme:

13, 14, 15	Dhulia	22	Gulbarga
16	Nasik	23	Pandharpur
17	Ahmednagar	24	Satara
18	Kurduwadi	25	Belgaum
19, 20, 21	Sholapur		

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1123. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

73. SPEECHES AT DHULIA[1]

February 13, 1927

The programme at Dhulia was heavy, but everything was so ordered and quiet that Gandhiji could address six meetings during the day, spinning on his charkha throughout the speeches! He said:

You will not regard me as impertinent if I go on spinning whilst I address you. I do so because of the wonderful stillness here, and because I think I can best respond to your affection by giving you an object-lesson in the thing I most believe in. When Dr. Tagore came to our Ashram some years ago,[2] I asked him, after the morning prayers were over, to address a few words to our boys. He said nothing, spoke nothing by way of apology, but sang one of his sweetest songs in his sweetest way and was

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"; the first speech is from the issue of February 24 and the other two from that of March 3.

[2] In 1920; *vide* Vol. XVII, p. 592.

quiet. That to my mind was the acme of his courtesy. He satisfied us with the best that his soul could give. I am simply following him in turning my wheel before you, which is my only lyre and through which I think I can render the greatest service to India.

There have been everywhere addresses from the local bodies. Let me summarize Gandhiji's reply to the Local Board address at Dhulia.

During my wanderings throughout the land I have not yet come across a single local body which has been functioning of its own independent initiative and which I could point to as an ideal body. Mr. Lionel Curtis remarking on the contrast between an Indian village and an English village said that whereas the one gives you an impression of general untidiness and reminds you of a village built on a dunghill, the other gives an impression of cleanliness and health and beauty all around. Of course he knew nothing of the condition of the Indian villager, he did not know that his daily income was five per cent of that of the English villager. But let us not ignore one substratum truth in his remark. There is no gainsaying the fact that our villager betrays a woeful ignorance of even the rudiments of village sanitation. One could deplore the race prejudice amongst the South African Europeans, but their attempts to keep their towns healthy and sanitary were heroic and worthy of imitation. Do not say that politics occupy all your time and that you have no time for other things. It is a lame excuse. The capacity to look after the village and town sanitation is included in our capacity for swaraj and when we demonstrate it, nothing on earth can stand between us and swaraj. You may be sure that we shall be able to retain only as much as our capacity has won for us. Some of our local bodies keep only those roads clean as are likely to be used by Government officials, but they have no regard for the roads which are used day and night by poor villagers and their bullocks, and which are always and everywhere ill-kept. Can't we make the roads more easy and better negotiable and make the villagers' and the bullocks' lot a little less irksome? . . .

At Dhulia the merchants had insisted on voting him an exclusive address and an exclusive purse, and in the address claimed Gandhiji as one of them, as belonging to the Vaisya class. And in his reply they got more than they had bargained for.

As I said at Jalpaiguri in 1925[1], it is not the Brahmins, nor the Kshatriyas nor the Sudras that lost India; it is the Vaisyas

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVII, p. 215.

who lost India, and it is the Vaisyas alone who can regain it. Indian history is replete with instances of Banias who helped and served the English shopkeeper to the prejudice of India. The shopkeepers who came here in search of trade became warriors to protect their trade and became Brahmins too to maintain their dominion based on trade. Our *varnashrama* dharma does not say that a Bania may not be a Kshatriya and fight for the honour of his mother and sister, nor does it say that a Bania may not acquire knowledge like the Brahmin and serve like the Sudra. The Englishman combined all the qualities in himself, and dazzled at his feat we forgot our dharma, we became cowards, we forgot the real work of the Bania—agriculture, cow-protection and trade—and became traitors to the motherland. You can retrieve the situation today by becoming true Banias again, by capturing again the whole of the national trade. Our black caps, our mill dhotis and our women's fine saris are the badges of our shame and slavery. Instead of keeping the raw produce in the country and manufacturing it we looked to our narrow interests of the hour, sold the raw produce, and helped the Englishman to tighten his grip on us. We are engaged in our immoral trade today to the eternal ruin of our motherland. Doctors may heal if we are ill, lawyers may help us in law-courts, but only merchants can win swaraj. I want us to be the Vaisya of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Vaisya whose natural calling is protection of the cow, agriculture and trade, for his own country. If we were true to our calling why should a scrap of foreign cloth come to our country, why should a cow be sold to a butcher, why should nine crore rupees worth of hides be sent out abroad? What is it that has so deadened our sense to our obvious duty? We think we must trade in foreign cloth, we refuse to listen if someone asks us to keep our dead cattle and treat their hides ourselves. We turn away in disgust when we are asked to convert our dairies into good milk-producing centres and tanneries. I cannot tell you the deep agony of my soul. Do you think I am mistaken? Do you think I am in my dotage? I tell you I shall pocket all my pride and fall at the feet of anyone who proves to me that I am wrong. Win me over to you, if you dare, otherwise follow me and take up the cause of khadi and the cow.

Young India, 24-2-1927 and 3-3-1927

74. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN MASHRUWALA

Sunday night [February 13, 1927]

CHI. SUSHILA,

I hope you have the letter[1] I wrote earlier. Preserve that letter as well as its enclosures. Let me have your reply. Let Nanabhai and others read the letter. Young people, young women especially, fight shy of discussing such matters with their elders. You need not feel the least embarrassment. You should not even hesitate to call each other by your names. In later life this kind of reserve comes in our way. I see no sense in it. Manilal too has become tongue-tied. I shall write to him to shake off his bashfulness.

Write to me about Gomatibehn's health. I do hope Kishorelal won't have fever again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1126. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

75. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

DHULIA,
February 14, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote yesterday a brief letter.

You need not worry about sending me your account[2]. You should certainly keep an account of every pice spent, and that not on scraps of paper, but in a properly kept account book. It is incredibly simple. There are credit entries and debit entries. Cash is debtor to the extent of moneys received by it, creditor to the extent paid out. Therefore receipts go to the debit side and expenditure to the credit side. Thus:

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sushilabehn Mashruwala", 13-2-1927.

[2] "Account-keeping was always a nightmare for me, and I finally reduced it to writing down everything and giving it to others to add up and balance." (Mirabehn)

Date	Dr. to		Date	Cr. by	
	Monies received from Ashram	150/–/–	12-8	Paid for	
				tonga	1/8/–
				postage	3/8/–
				Balance	145/–/–
		150/–/–			150/–/–

This is how according to the English system all cash-books are kept, and yours is a cash-book. A ledger is an index for the different accounts in a cash-book and a day-book. A day-book contains all transactions where no cash passes. Thus sales on credit and purchases on credit will be entered in a day-book. This is in practice the whole of account keeping.

I am surprised you had no wheel there. I must give you a travelling charkha such as I have. I am asking Khadi Pratishthan to send one to you. If you cannot manage it yourself, I must teach you when I come there.

Dhulia is a very restful place. We are accommodated in the house of a worker who joined me when I was working in Champaran. And here too lives a gentleman who wears a face gentler even than Andrews, if it is possible. Akola was another such place. And Akola has given me a bride for Manilal. She is Kishorelal's niece, 19 years old. Marriage will take place almost immediately. She will accompany Manilal when he leaves for South Africa. She belongs to a godly family.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

17	Ahmednagar	23	Pandharpur
18	Kurduwadi	24	Satara
19, 20, 21	Sholapur	25	Belgaum
22	Gulbarga	26	Vengurla
		27, 28	Ratnagiri

If I cannot give you the other dates you may address Ratnagiri till 3rd.

4th Bombay: Mani Bhavan, Laburnam Road, Gamdevi

From the original: C.W. 5204. Courtesy: Mirabehn

76. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

DHULIA,
Monday [February 14, 1927][1]

DEAR SISTER,

God is testing you severely. Never give up. Happiness and unhappiness, birth and death, old age and disease are ever with us. I could not bear to see you crying when I was at Sodepur. It is good if God would let our dear ones be with us, nor is it bad if He takes them away. They belong to Him; and what is it to us if He takes away his own? Surely, He is going to take away everyone. Being the greatest of all actors we call Him *Natavar*, the Supreme Actor. He tosses us as He pleases. We are after all puppets. Is it not better to dance in tune with Him than with the world?

May God grant peace to you all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1663

77. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

DHULIA,
Monday [February 14, 1927][2]

BHAI BRIJKRISHNA,

I am awaiting your reply about the job at Jamshedpur. Have you now regained your peace of mind?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2355

[1] From the reference to the death of addressee's son. *Vide* also "Letter to Hemaprabha Devi Das Gupta", 19-2-1927.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 22-2-1927.

78. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day [February 14, 1927][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

You must have got the news about Manilal. If Manilal has not shown the letters written to him, you will know from letter to Chhaganlal. Please inform everyone. I do not know if Nanabhai will have Panditji or someone else to perform the rites; I have left it to him. Please ask Panditji to be ready in case he has to go. The wedding will be at Akola.

Herewith two more letters from Mirabehn. I have already asked Mahadev to write to you about Parasram.

Please let me have the news from Vijapur. Ask John to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7764. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

79. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

DHULIA,
Monday, Maha Sud 13 [February 14, 1927][2]

SISTERS,

I am in receipt of your letter written by Chi. Manibehn.

What you write to me in regard to women who intend to visit the Ashram is quite right. For the present, I cannot expect any of you to keep them with you. I wish only that you will mix freely with them, will look after them if they are ill, will not keep away from them, and you will invite them off and on to your midst.

You might have known that Tara's elder sister Chi. Sushila has been betrothed to Chi. Manilal. The marriage will take place at Akola on the 6th of March. I shall, therefore, reach the Ashram on the evening of the 8th or on the morning of the 9th. 14th is Monday. I shall stay on in the Ashram till that day, and

[1] & [2] From the reference to the news about Manilal's wedding

then again I set out. So I shall have only a few days in the Ashram.

Whether I will or no, I get involved thus in marriages. And yet the more I am drawn into such activities, the more I see that it is very necessary for men and women to observe *brahmacharya*. Chi. Manilal remained unmarried for 32 years, merely in order to develop self-control. He then expressed a desire to marry, and so I began looking for a good match. As he is to marry in a family of persons devoted to God, I expect nothing but good to result from this alliance.

We should not feel bashful to talk about marriage. But whether married or unmarried, we should not become a prey to passion by such talk. One who cannot control one's passions should certainly marry. But one who can control them, should do so and seek to obtain *moksha* in this very life.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3639

80. *LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA*

Silence Day [February 14, 1927][1]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your telegram. I am glad that the 6th suits you. Please get either Gopalrao from Wardha or Sahasrabuddhe there for the marriage ceremony; or shall we ask Panditji to come over from the Ashram? Or if there is some particular person in your view, that makes no difference for me. Nothing suits me better than if Nath himself performs the rites. If you would have Panditji, let me know by wire.

We shall have no ceremony other than the strictly religious. You must not incur expenditure by putting up pandals and other things. Please have no sweets in the meals. Our new relationship is not going to make you my in-laws nor is Sushila going to be my daughter-in-law; she will still be a daughter to me, and you will all be my cousins as always.

You must not give away with the bride so much as a grain of gold. Indeed, she must not wear any jewellery on the occasion.

[1] From the discussion about Manilal's wedding and Gandhiji's tour programme

If afterwards she has a liking for them I shall be helpless. Because she has as much freedom as you and I.

On my part I am not bringing her anything besides a garland of my hand-spun yarn. Of course I am going to present her a takli, the *Gita* and a copy of the *Bhajanavali*, if available.

In South Africa Manilal wears foreign dress; he had asked my permission for it, but Sushila would not need it. In her khaddar sari she will be as resplendent as the celebrated Sita. Please do not gather a crowd, nevertheless do not hesitate to invite those whom you ought to. I shall leave Bombay along with Manilal by the Nagpur Mail and reach Akola on the 6th morning. The 7th being a Monday, I shall stay on there. On the 7th if there is a convenient train in the evening I shall straight away leave for Ahmedabad.

Ramdas and Devdas may arrive there either with me or direct. I will not stop anyone else who wants to go there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My Tour Programme:

15 Dhulia
16 Nasik
17 Ahmednagar
18 Kurduwadi
19, 20, 21 Sholapur
22 Gulbarga
23 Pandharpur
24 Satara
25 Belgaum
26 Vengurla
27, 28, 1, 2, 3 Ratnagiri and adjoining areas
4 Bombay

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1120. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

81. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[February 14, 1927][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. The marriage will be at Akola. The day has been fixed for Sunday, 6th March. I have to go to Akola direct from Bombay. I am likely to reach Bombay not earlier than the 4th. Being a Monday, the 7th will be spent in Akola. We can leave on the 7th evening and reach the Ashram on the 8th evening or the 9th morning.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

I have written to Nanabhai asking him not to put up any show. He should give the bride not even the most insignificant jewels. I am giving her nothing. In South Africa, you use foreign dress with my permission but Sushila need do nothing of the sort; in her khaddar sari she will look as resplendent as Sita. Let me know if you want any change in these arrangements. After you are married you are both free to live as you like. But I certainly wish that you should give no jewels to Sushila and that there too she should wear no cloth other than khadi.

The more I think the more I feel that you are going to have a jewel. My only fear is whether you would be able to take care of her.

Please keep your passion under control; let her study. The girl would be helpful in many of your activities. She can even learn composing. If she tries she can improve her Gujarati but it all depends upon you whether you would make a doll or a companion out of her. After all, she is just a child. She does not know the ways of the world. If, henceforth, you will observe more restraint than hitherto I see a blissful future for both of you.

May God grant strength and wisdom to both of you.

Now you can easily go to South Africa in March. You can make the necessary preparations.

You should start from there on the 4th and meet me in Bombay on the morning of the 5th.

I am writing to Ramdas and Devdas that they may come along if they want to.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have sent your letter to Sushila. Write nothing to Harilal.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1130. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

82. *LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR*

[After *February 15, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI RAMESHWARJI,

I have both your letters. The garland that you got was given [to me] for khadi work; so the price you paid for it would be utilized for the same cause. For cow-protection too we should do only what is right, and now I shall need quite a lot for it since the tanning school has started functioning. But we must be patient.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 206

83. *LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL*

ON THE WAY TO NASIK,
Wednesday, February 16[2], *1927*

CHI. MANI,

I have got your letter. It looks as if I shall reach there on the 8th at the earliest. There is no news from Karachi.

How is it that Gangadevi falls ill every now and then? We shall arrange for her to go somewhere else for a change of climate if she wants to. Ask her as well as Totaram. Does she have a restricted diet?

I will subject you to a test in Sanskrit, carding, spinning, etc., when I come. Improve still more your Gujarati handwriting and make further progress in Gujarati grammar.

The programme for perfecting the Ashram kitchen which has been engaging their attention much must now be brought to an end. Do your bit.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 53

[1] During his Maharashtra tour Gandhiji was in Dhulia, the addressee's home town, from February 13 to 15. It is presumed that the garland mentioned in the letter was auctioned by Gandhiji in Dhulia.

[2] The source has "18".

84. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [February 16, 1927][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got all your letters. I have asked Mahadev to reply to them as well as to take the necessary action. Something has already been done.

I still have to write about the laxity in spinning. I shall take out some time and attend to it. I am writing this on a moving train. The schedule was such that I could do nothing. But now I have asked the programmes to be so arranged that I may get some more margin. Who else but the Charkha Bhandar is to make up the losses resulting from the transfer to Jerajani when the two stores are amalgamated? I do not very well understand it as I have forgotten many of the facts. Anyway we shall finally decide about it in the Conference which is to be held at Belgaum on the 25th or 26th. Are you supposed to attend it? Take over into the Charkha Sangh the yarn we got from South Africa. I am very glad that you examine the strength of all the yarn. Whatever time is spent in it is only . . .[2] for us because we get to learn much out of it.

Whatever experiences you have, whatever there is worth knowing, do write out in Gujarati and send over to me so that it can be published in *Navajivan* and we can also take out of it whatever we want for *Young India*.

Other things you will learn there and so I do not write about them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7712. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the reference to the "moving train" it appears that the letter was written on the same date as the preceding letter. The itineraries show that Gandhiji planned to be in Belgaum on the 25th or 26th.

[2] Illegible in the source

85. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NASIK,
February 16, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I had first thought of asking the Khadi Pratishthan people to debit the Ashram with the price of the travelling charkha that will be sent to you. But I reconsidered my decision and I saw that it would be cheaper to have the charkha by value payable parcel. If therefore you receive a parcel from Calcutta by value payable post, please discharge the bill there.

On the 6th and 7th of March, I shall be at Akola for Manilal's marriage. From the 8th to 14th March I am at the Ashram, 15th to 17th Bardoli. I entrain at Surat on the evening of the 17th for the Gurukul.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Better a dictated letter than none.

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN
GURUKUL KANGRI

From the original: C.W. 5205. Courtesy: Mirabehn.

86. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Wednesday [February 16, 1927][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I shall reach Bombay some time on the 4th or by the morning of the 5th. Dastane wants me to be in Poona on the 4th. Jaisukhlal Mehta wants me to devote a few hours to Santa Cruz. If I can satisfy him by spending the 5th morning at Santa Cruz I can allot the evening of the 4th to Poona and leave there on the same night for Bombay from where I can proceed to Akola.

[1] From the reference to Manilal's wedding and Gandhiji's programme "to proceed to Sangamner"

Since Gomati has returned there she and Kishorelal need not again come to Akola. If Nath is there please ascertain from him if he would perform the wedding rites. I would like to have the ceremony performed by him, if it is no inconvenience to him.

I think it would not matter if you could not come because of Janakibehn's operation or something else.

I have to proceed to Sangamner this very evening.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2884

87. SPEECH AT NASIK[1]

February 16, 1927

Some youths handed over to me several questions as soon as I arrived here; my replies to them will be my speech today.

[1.] Don't you think as a Hindu you should concentrate on collecting for the Shraddhanand Fund rather than for any other fund?

I am an imperfect mortal and my capacities are limited. I know the theory and practice of economy, and whilst all my time and energy are given to the country, I am not vain enough to think that I should do all things myself. The work you refer to is engaging the attention and energies of men like Malaviyaji and Lalaji and there is no reason why I should also put in my oar. At the first meeting held in Calcutta[2] to collect funds for raising a fitting memorial to Shraddhanandji, I was asked to be present by Pandit Malaviyaji and I did so. I do not think he expects more from me. I claim to follow in daily life the teachings of the *Gita* and I know that, humble as is the work that I am doing, it is better for me than much other work which may be quite as good and even better but which is not my work.

[2.] The collections you make today are only for khadi, are they not so? If they are, how will you utilize them?

Yes, of course, this fund is only for khadi because it is being collected for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. The Deshbandhu's name has been associated with this fund because

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The introductory paragraph, questions 2, 5 and 6, and their answers are from *Navajivan*, 27-2-1927.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XXXII, 479-80.

he had drawn up, a few days before his death, a scheme for the organization of villages through khadi. Khadi work was dear to him. The All-India Spinners' Association has been set up only to collect funds for khadi and use them to organize work. Accounts of its funds are being maintained to a pie and everyone has a right to inspect them. The Association has an executive committee, auditors and inspectors. This Association has now placed before the country a scheme for an organization of khadi service. You will ask what effective work this association can do, paying as it will be only thirty rupees a month to each worker. Of course, ours is a poor Association, for it has been established with money collected from the poorest of the poor. It is not another Indian Civil Service, so that it can afford to pay salaries of thousands of rupees. The Indian Civil Service is maintained with taxes paid by the people and is meant to rule the people; our poor little association is meant to serve them.

[3.] Are you partial to the Mussalmans? Why don't you answer the charges some of the Mussalman leaders level against you?

I can do justice to people of other faiths by appearing to be partial to them, and I know that I am protecting my own faith by showing if you will a reasoned partiality for other faiths. I do not, I cannot, wish to harm the Hindu religion, for I am after all a drop in the ocean of Hinduism. If Mussalmans call me kaffir, what then? What can be the answer to it? In South Africa, a nephew of mine was staying with me. It was only when people said that I was partial to him that he realized, and I realized, that I was only just to him. The fact that the Mussalmans are finding fault with me possibly suggests that I am not yet sufficiently partial to them to convince them that I am just to them. Why should I answer their charges? All my twenty-four hours are consecrated to the service of Lord Krishna who is ever with me, who guides my footsteps, and whom I always pray to do whatever is needed for me. He will answer for me, if there be any need.

[4.] If you fought for the Khilafat, why do you not fight for the Hindu *sangathan*[1] today?

The question is well asked. I had pledged myself to lay down my life for the Khilafat and I knew that I was indirectly helping thereby the cause of the cow. 'How much cow-protection have you achieved?'—you will ask. Very little, I admit. But what does

[1] Movement for unity

that matter to me? "To work you have the right and duty and not to fruit thereof," says the *Gita*.[1] It was at the bidding of the Lord that I offered my co-operation to the Ali Brothers and rendered whatever help I could. I have never had reason to regret it. I would do the same thing should another occasion arise. That is the teaching of all our religious books. Let the people rail at me, insult me if they like. I am not going to pay them back in their coin. Mine is the religion of *tapascharya*, the way of penance taught by the scriptures and by Tulsidas. That is the law of my being and I cannot do otherwise. "The whole creation," says the *Gita*, "follows the law of its being. How will restraint then avail?"[2] My joy is in the fulfilment of my duty and the confidence that when some day the Mussalmans join hands with the Hindus in protecting the cow, everyone will say that the good result is due to the efforts of that mad Gandhi who died working for the cause.

In my opinion, there is no sanction in Hinduism, Islam or Christianity for the *shuddhi*, *tabligh* or proselytizing (respectively) as it is going on today. How then can I take part in the *shuddhi*? The *Gita* and the Tulsi *Ramayana* teach me to resort to self-purification whenever I or my religion is in danger. And what is true for me is true for all. That process of self-purification I am going through all the twenty-four hours of my day. Parvati, Narada had foretold, would have an ominous-looking husband. She knew that only Siva was as blissful as he was ominous-looking and she performed penance for winning Siva and won him. So the lesson of penance and self-purification is writ large everywhere in our scriptures and the Himalayas are the living witness to it—the Himalayas where countless *rishis* ground their bodies to dust for self-purification. The Vedas, to me, are not the texts writ on paper, but my very conscience and the In-dweller. They tell me to observe *yama* and *niyama* (the cardinal and the causal virtues) and trust everything to Lord Krishna. In all humility I claim that all my work is conducive to the service of Hinduism. As a Hindu, I could do nothing else. The way of doing it is of course my own.

[5.] Do you know that most of the donors of the money that will be presented to you today are dealers in foreign cloth, and they give you money for the love they bear you, not for the love of khadi?

[1] II. 47

[2] III. 33

I do not want a single pice offered through love for me; I want people to appreciate my mission and help it with money. Through love you can give me another thing. Through it you can give me your foreign clothes, but not money. The truth is that business men give me money in the belief that, if my business thrives, it will harm neither them nor the country. They know that ultimately they will have to deal in khadi. They understand the position correctly but today they lack strength of will. They ask me to pray to God that He may grant them that strength. Meanwhile, they donate money and help this movement. They do not give me money in order to deceive me.

[6.] Why do you confine yourself to khadi work alone and neglect other important or even more important political activities?

I have already said that the sphere of my work is limited. Duryodhana described how his warriors had taken up their due positions on the battle-field. He had asked everyone to remain in his place and protect Bhishma. The *varnashrama* dharma taught in the *Gita* also says the same thing. It asks everyone to know his own sphere of work. If India wants me to serve it, it must understand my limitations. Although it is possible that I can do other jobs well, there are people doing them. As I believe that no one else can do khadi work as well as I can and since I regard khadi work as my supreme duty, I have confined myself to that work. I favour satyagraha, I want to start it, but I want to create a suitable atmosphere for it through khadi. Satyagraha is like my very breath, but I regard it as impossible without khadi.

[7.] What is the extent of the help you are getting from the Mussalmans during this tour?

I admit that for my khadi work I have been having not much help from them. But what does that matter? I do not bargain with my brother or wife in my domestic affairs. I do my duty and leave the rest to do theirs. In the same way I will not bargain with the Mussalmans, as I will not with Pandit Motilalji or Kelkar. Why should we fear the Mussalmans? We need fear only God and no man. Even if men should play you false, do not be deterred from doing your duty, in the confidence that God will take care of you.

Young India, 3-3-1927

88. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[Before *February 17, 1927*][1]

DEAR SATIS BABU,

You must be well. Now that you have gone out of Calcutta, you must give yourself prolonged rest and be thoroughly restored. You will not be anxious about Pratishthan affairs. Leave them in God's hands in so far as your share of the work is concerned. After all khadi is not and cannot be one man's affair. If it is pleasing in the eye of God, He will raise His own instruments and keep in order those He has raised. Let us realize that we are nothing even as a machine is nothing. The machinist is everything. Let us reduce the teaching of the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* to practice and we shall cease to worry.

Do please keep me well posted with news about yourselves.

Here are the dates:

17 Ahmednagar
18 Kurduwadi
19, 20, 21 Sholapur
22 Gulbarga
23 Pandharpur
24 Satara
25 Belgaum
26 Vengurla
27,28 Ratnagiri
1, 2, 3 March Ratnagiri
4 Bombay

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1633

89. OUT OF NOTHING

When one thinks of the immense possibility of the charkha it is surprising that its simple message is taking so long to become universal. "Nothing comes out of nothing," says a Latin proverb. But the charkha would seem to falsify at least the letter of the proverb. For without destroying or replacing anything useful, it seeks to utilize the waste and idle hours of the nation.

This idleness, whether it be regarded as enforced or voluntary, is killing the very soul of the nation. The more I penetrate

[1] From the tour programme

the villages, the greater is the shock delivered as I perceive the blank stare in the eyes of the villagers I meet. Having nothing else to do but to work as labourers side by side with their bullocks, they have become almost like them. It is a tragedy of the first magnitude that millions have ceased to use their hands as hands. Nature is revenging herself upon us with terrible effect for this criminal waste of the gift she has bestowed upon us human beings. We refuse to make full use of the gift. And it is the exquisite mechanism of the hands that among a few other things separates us from the beast. Millions of us use them merely as feet. The result is that she starves both the body and the mind.

The spinning-wheel alone can stop this reckless waste. It can do that now and without any extraordinary outlay of money or intelligence. Owing to this waste, we are living in a state almost of suspended animation. It can be revived if only every home is again turned into a spinning-mill and every village into a weaving-mill. With it will at once revive the ancient rustic art and the rustic song. A semi-starved nation can have neither religion nor art nor organization.

The only objection that has been urged by its critics is that the wheel does not pay. But even if it pays only one pice per day, it does pay when we remember that our average income is six pice per day against the fourteen rupees and six rupees per day respectively of the average American and the average Englishman. The spinning-wheel is an attempt to produce something out of nothing. If we save sixty crores of rupees to the nation through the spinning-wheel, as we certainly can, we add that vast amount to the national income. In the process we automatically organize our villages. And as almost the whole of the amount must be distributed amongst the poorest of the land, it becomes a scheme of just and nearly equal distribution of so much wealth. Add to this the immense moral value of such distribution, and the case for the charkha becomes irresistible.

Young India, 17-2-1927

90. A GREAT SPINNER

When at the end of the Bihar tour and on my way to the Central Provinces, I heard at Calcutta of the death of Babu Jogeshwar Chatterjee whom I had the privilege of knowing as a spinner who gave promise of being able to revive the old Dacca *shubnum*—the night-dew muslin—I at once sent a message[1] to Kshitish Babu of Khadi Pratishthan to supply me with details of the deceased's life. These have been now received and I share them with the reader:[2]

> Jogeshwar Chatterjee, son of Sjt. Jatileshwar Chatterjee of village Panpur in the district of 24-Parganas . . . died on Sunday, the 30th January morning. He left behind him his wife, a daughter aged one year, a younger brother and aged father. . . .
>
> Jogeshwar Babu read up to B.A., and was a teacher for some time. He then took service in the E.B.R., and served it for seven years. . . . He was aged 35 at the time of death.
>
> He took to spinning during the Non-co-operation days, and was an ardent spinner. . . . At the Gauhati Exhibition a muslin of 200 counts was exhibited by the Pratishthan, the yarn of which was spun by Jogeshwar Babu. During one year—Cawnpore Exhibition to Gauhati Exhibition—he spun 200 count yarn for the above muslin, and sufficient yarn of 100 count, out of which two dhotis are made. Of the last two dhotis, one was for Acharya P. C. Ray and the other for his father. . . .
>
> He was all along spinning on the Pratishthan's box charkha. He was out-and-out a khadi man, who used to spin during leisure hours, and made such a rapid progress in spinning.

I tender my condolences to the family of the deceased and hope that the attempt to reproduce the ancient art will not die with Jogesh Babu's death. Let it be remembered that Jogesh Babu's was a labour of patriotic love. And it is only voluntary spinners who can follow up Jogesh Babu's grand effort.

Young India, 17-2-1927

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kshitish Chandra Das Gupta", 13-2-1927.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

91. LETTER TO HARRY KINGMAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,[1]
February 18, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter which is so seasonable.[2] Could you not give me some reliable literature on the Chinese movement and give me a truthful story of current events? I never put much reliance upon newspapers and I am most anxious to know what is happening now in China.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HARRY KINGMAN, ESQ.
68, RECREATION ROAD
TIENTSIN
CHINA

From a photostat: G.N. 5043

92. SPEECH AT AHMEDNAGAR[3]

February 18, 1927

I have just been to the Rashtriya Pathshala. I have inspected for nearly an hour like a strict inspector all the management and working of the institution and found it to my satisfaction. I have thoroughly examined the boys in a lively heart-to-heart talk and found them sharp in intellect and prompt in answers. In short, I see in Ahmednagar Rashtriya Pathshala a lovely little oasis in the midst of such a vast desert of darkness.[4]

[Continuing,] Mr. Gandhi said that, if Ahmednagar district was poor, the rest of India was poorer still. Hundreds of thousands of men and women were without any kind of employment and almost starving. He had not the slightest doubt in his mind that khadi work alone could give these people some

[1] Permanent address

[2] *Vide* "Our Helplessness", 3-2-1927.

[3] In reply to addresses by the Municipality, District Board and Hindu Sabha

[4] From a microfilm (S.N. 14841) of a printed pamphlet issued in 1928 by Principal H. B. Hiray, Rashtriya Pathshala, Ahmednagar

employment and bread. He appealed to all present to give their mite to him for his great work.

The Hindu, 19-2-1927

93. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

MIRAZGAON,
February 19, 1927

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

So you and Hemaprabha Devi are being tried through and through. You will stand this very severe test and come out victorious. Read the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* again and again and face the battle like true warriors that you are. It is now your double duty to take care of yourselves. Among the properties you hold in trust for God's purposes, your bodies are not the least important. If we may not indulge them neither may we forbare them through false love [*sic*].

But enough of philosophy. Ever since the receipt of the telegram I have prayed for you. And this letter is the first thing I have taken up after the morning prayer. May God sustain you and bless you.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1565

94. *LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA*

Saturday [February 19, 1927][1]

DEAR SISTER,

What can I write to you? May your wisdom, your faith and your devotion all come to your succour. Can Anil die? Anil is with us for ever, only his body has been shed. Pray, do not lose heart.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1661

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

95. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Saturday [February 19, 1927][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I did not wire to you because I had no reason to stop you from trying to meet Lalaji's demand.

For some time I would like to have a postcard daily informing me about Janakibehn's health.

Anil, Satis Babu's son, has expired. Satis Babu is at Giridih. His address is: Home Villa, Giridih. It would however be safer to write to the Khadi Pratishthan address. I have a telegram telling me that both of them have sustained a great shock. I have sent them a long wire of condolence.

Now it is certain that I shall reach Bombay on the 5th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2885

96. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL

ON TOUR,
February 19, 1927

BHAI PRABHUDAYALJI,

Your letter has been moving along with me. I could lay my hand on it only today.

However much the world may change, if you are convinced that khadi brings material as well as spiritual benefit and that other stuff merely pleases one's fancy, you should be content with khaddar clothes alone.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: G.N. 10063

[1] From the reference to Anil's death

97. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

[After *February 19, 1927*][1]

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your pathetic letter which I see you wrote to lighten your burden. Gods, it is said, take away those they love most. The human mind has devised many methods of assuaging grief. But the real fact is not to feel the grief. But that is almost superhuman especially in Hindu society. Please tell Hemaprabha Devi not to think of what Anil would have done, if he had lived. His work in that body was finished. A rare soul such as Anil's had much higher work to do and he left the body. Let us not grieve over *our* loss which may be the world's gain. It is as well that we do not know the mysteries of life and death. I want you both now to get rid of your weakness. Pray do not think of stirring till you have fully recuperated yourself.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1634

98. *LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

ON THE TRAIN,
[After *February 19, 1927*][2]

DEAR KSHITISH BABU,

I did not know till today, and after the receipt of Satis Babu's letter that you had no son and that you were lavishing all your affection on Anil as your own son. Your grief I am able now to understand more fully than I had done before. It is difficult on such occasions to give any consolation. It has to come from within. May all your knowledge and your faith come to your assistance to give you courage and hope. If only our faith in the

[1] The letter appears to have been written on receipt of addressee's reply to Gandhiji's condolence letter of February 19.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

immortality of soul is real, nothing like death can matter. May God give you peace and strength.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8923

99. *LETTER TO EKAROZ*

ON TOUR,
February 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I espoused the Khilafat cause not for the sake of tyranny but for the sake of humanity. This insidious attempt that, I think, was made to destroy the Khilafat had to be resisted. My resistance being non-violent prevented in my opinion, violence which would but for the movement have undoubtedly broken out. The Khilafat movement was not decided upon to bolster any Turkish tyranny. Wherever tyranny exists, it must be resisted by non-violent means.

Yours sincerely,

REV. FR. EKAROZ
HAIFA, GERMAN HOSPISEE OF ST. CHARLES
PALESTINE

From a photostat: S.N. 11785

100. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*[1]

February 20, 1927

You forget you are a son of Bapu's niece; Manilal therefore is your maternal uncle. Would children offer any presents to their mother? Herein you forget even our Hindu tradition. However, if you are so affluent, I am willing to accept the amount for cow-protection and the tanning school. I might grab all the money that you may offer. So, if you are not going to be disappointed, you had better take my advice and keep quiet over it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 92

[1] Written by Mahadev Desai to Gandhiji's dictation

101. SPEECH AT SHOLAPUR[1]

February 20, 1927

As at Nasik,[2] the speech at Sholapur was a reply to questions and criticisms made in an open letter addressed to Gandhiji by some people from the town. Their first criticism was that those who appeared in khadi on the occasion of Gandhiji's visit were hypocrites inasmuch as they would shelve it the day he left. Did that indicate the progress of khadi? Gandhiji said:

Well, I do not know. I know that I am selling khadi wherever I go, and there ends my work. Supposing you purchase from me millions of rupees worth of khadi and sink it into the sea, the sale is not vitiated. But the criticism is unfair. I know that some wear khadi for the occasion, but they do not disguise the fact. They appreciate the message of khadi, but they say they cannot exclusively wear it for a number of reasons. Am I to tell them, 'You are no good. I can do without your khadi?' No, no. My duty is to define our dharma in its fulness. Their duty is to follow it as much as they can. People deceive me, you say. I do not understand how they can harm me even if they do. I am but a self-appointed agent of *Daridranarayana* and I shall take from you only what you can give me. . . .

"You are good enough," they say, "but your work has ruined the country." I am but an erring mortal and like any one of you I am full of shortcomings; therefore I beseech you to reject them and simply make the best of my capacity for service. Turn my good points to account and reject the bad ones. If you do not pick and choose and simply reject me wholesale, what will the world say to you? Will you regret the service of a man as a carrier because he is blind?

As I said at Nasik, I fail to understand the *shuddhi*, *tabligh* and proselytization as they are carried on today. I cannot understand a man changing the religion of his forefathers at the instance of another. But that is my personal conviction. No one need stop *shuddhi*, *tabligh* or proselytization at my instance. My own duty is clear. I must go on purifying myself and hoping that only thereby would I react on my surroundings. It is my unshakable conviction that penance and self-purification are the only means for

[1] This was published under the title, "Two Speeches".

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Nasik", 16-2-1927.

the protection of Hinduism. Do any amount of *sangathan*, only let not that *sangathan* be of the evil forces, let it be only of the forces of good. . . .

You say I am partial to the Mussalmans. So be it, though the Mussalmans do not admit it. But my religion will not suffer by even an iota by reason of my partiality. I shall have to answer my God and my Maker if I give anyone less than his due, but I am sure that He will bless me if He knows that I gave someone more than his due. I ask you to understand me. If my hand or heart has done anything more than was anyone's due, you should be proud of it, rather than deplore it. It should be a matter of pride to you as Hindus to think that there was amongst you at least one mad Gandhi who was not only just to the Mussalmans, but even went out of his way in giving them more than their due. Hinduism is replete with instances of tolerance, sacrifice and forgiveness. Think of the sacrifice of the Pandavas, think of the forgiveness of Yudhishthira. Should it be a matter for sorrow for you, that there is at least one man who has tried to carry out the precept of Hinduism to the letter? . . .

If there is anything in the charge that you are wearing khadi just to please me, and for show, I say for God's sake do not do so. I am not a Mahatma. If I am one, the Mahatmaship is but the expression of some *shakti*[1]. Pray do nothing for my sake. I shuddered when someone proposed that though I was silent I should exhibit myself for *darshan*[2]. I assure you the words '*darshan*' and 'Mahatma' stink in my nostrils. I am unworthy of giving *darshan*. Even like you I am a vessel of clay, liable to all the affections and passions that flesh is heir to. How can I be fit to give you *darshan*? One and only one *darshan* is necessary, viz., that of the nameless, formless, indefinable Absolute. Try, if you can, to see Him everywhere, in a poor man's hut as in a palace, in a latrine as well as in a temple. Have, if you will, the *darshan* of khadi and visualize its immense potentialities. Dismiss the mortal frame called Gandhi from your mind. Its *darshan* will be of no avail.

Young India, 10-3-1927

[1] Power

[2] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

102. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[Before *February 21, 1927*][1]

Haste is waste. Let me do a few places thoroughly rather than many places indifferently. You will have to remember that I have to do continuous travelling throughout the year. My capacity and energy are limited. I must therefore have three forty-five minutes for three meals, one forty-five minutes for bath, etc., and two forty-five minutes for a quiet walk in the morning and evening. I must be made to retire at 9 p.m., and I must have three hours for attending to correspondence and editing, and I must have half an hour for sleep during day. If you can give me these hours, I fancy that I shall not only bear the strain of travelling but go on almost indefinitely and shall improve in health.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-2-1927

103. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

SHOLAPUR,
February 21, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter from Delhi. I note your remarks about Gurukuls. I have not yet [got] Ramachandra's letter. I am not at all sorry you have gone to the Gurukul. The Gurukuls are an honest attempt. I want you to discuss these things fully with Ramdevji and others. You will influence them when you speak to them with a loving heart. We must measure people with their own measure and see how far they come up to it. You do not need this caution. But seeing that you have set a rigorous standard for yourself and you are in a strange environment, I am anxious for you not to lose your balance even by a hair's breadth.

I have too much pressure today to write more.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

[1] Released on February 21, 1927 from Madras by the Free Press

[PS.]

Satis Babu has lost his eldest son. Write to him care Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur, Calcutta.

26th Belgaum	8th Bombay
5th Bombay	9th-14th Ashram
6th, 7th Akola (Manilal's marriage)	

From the original: C.W. 5206. Courtesy: Mirabehn

104. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

Monday [February 21, 1927][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I do not want Sushila to make a resolve; I do not know her that well. But you should acquaint yourself with her people. They are a cultured family. All of them wear khadi. I agree it is difficult for you to wear khadi. It will not be difficult for Sushila as long as she keeps up her Indian style with sari and other things. A presentable khaddar dress can be had at a reasonable price. People dressed in khadi are to be found now even in distant Edinburgh.

It is not my attempt to make recluses of you or Sushila, but I certainly intend to make you disciplined householders. If I wanted to make you monks I would not have bothered about getting you married. I would not disapprove if you sought your pleasure within limits. In spite of all this you are free and should act as you please; I do not want to exercise the least pressure.

Jamnalalji has not turned a recluse, only he has given up a number of pleasures. You are quite grown-up and I do not look upon you as a child.

I have been taking steps after consulting you about everything. Do let me know if you wish for any change in the marriage ceremony or for some merriment. I have suggested and acted as I thought fit but I want to be as agreeable to you as I can while following my own code of conduct[2]. I know marriage is a turning point in the life of a young man and woman. I am also aware

[1] From the reference to Manilal's wedding and the message to Panditji in this and the succeeding two letters, it appears that all the three were written on the same date.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 14-2-1927.

that parents should not interfere in it. Do not think yourself to be under any kind of pressure. Do I need to be more frank? Do I have to give any more reassurance?

Nanabhai has invited Panditji, so he should come with you. Both of you can meet me by taking the Tapti Valley route; thereby you can also save some time. But do what both of you find convenient.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1119. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

105. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

Monday [*February 21, 1927*][1]

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. The wedding may take place at 10-30. Evening would never suit me.

Why should you offer a dress to Manilal? The dress he will have on, won't that do? However, I would not hurt your feelings.

Tell Chi. Sushila that she must cultivate the habit of writing letters. Once she starts writing she will not be short of topics.

I have written for Panditji's coming over.

You need not send biscuits from there. I have collected plenty of them on my way. Vijayalakshmi may pack a tin for me when I reach there.

Does she still want to have Manilal stay with her for some days? If she does I would send him there a few days ahead or he may stay on for some days after the marriage. You already have my tour programme.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1121. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

106. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Monday [February 21, 1927]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter.

For the present take such work from Parasram as he can do.

Ask Panditji to be ready. He should take a train from Sabarmati on the 5th morning to save time and money, and join me at Jalgaon by taking the Tapti Valley route. It will do if Manilal also takes the same train. But they may, if they want to, travel *via* Bombay. Panditji should write to Nanabhai about the preparations to be made. The marriage ceremony is to be performed on Sunday at 10-30 a.m.

I was under the impression that Ganesh's Christian name was John. Because of this and because I had forgotten the name Ganesh, I wrote John.[1] Give him this new letter in which I refer to him by the name of Ganesh. And if the fellow can take a joke and would not mind his name being forgotten, give him the one which carries the name of John too. Otherwise destroy that letter.

Now I do not have to worry about Rukhi.

I feel we must not let the common mess close, though those who want to, may drop out of it. Cooking and social activities must be carried on together.

We are bound to devote the minimum amount necessary for the tannery and the [water] lift. The funds for cow-protection have to be used for the tannery. I remember a resolution to this effect adopted at Wardha. If not we will pass one on the 11th. We must take up that activity which involves no risk of loss.

For the lift too we shall collect the amount needed. But I shall decide about it after I reach there on the 9th.

The amount from Mirabehn comes in regularly. All of it is to be spent at the Ashram. Since a year is over, we can now utilize the amount. Only you have to be careful that we do not suffer any loss on account of an error in accounts or some other slip.

Are you now in a position to meet the demand for lifts and to set them up? I have deliberately omitted to publish anything [about the lift]. Write to me if you want it to be publicized so that I can prepare an article for the next issue. Let me know what

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 2-2-1927.

I may write. Have you now trained people to work the lift? I believe I must mention the minimum weight of the animal that should go with each. Why can we not use an old buffalo? Why not a good or pliant bull? There should be no error in our calculations. I am afraid, we might have to depute our men in all places for quite some time. But it will be all right if you have given thought to all this.

The same applies to hides and skins. Let me have a copy of the pamphlet about this. I will publish it after examining it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

A special letter for the Ashram is enclosed.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7762. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

107. LETTER TO ASHRAM MEMBERS

Silence Day, February 21, 1927

I see from the letters I get that attendance at the prayer is irregular and thin. A general slackness is also creeping into the spinning.

Spinning and prayer are the two beacons for us. If we do not keep an eye on them, we will be able to do no credit either to the Ashram or to ourselves. It is one thing not to do them after deciding right from the beginning that we would not engage in either of them, and another to omit doing them after undertaking them. In my opinion, he who approves of neither can achieve nothing at the Ashram, since we regard them both as essential religious activities. Those who, while approving of them, grow lax in their practice will develop a general laxity. If we wish to learn to insist on truth and to experience the strength it gives, we must never omit to perform the two aforesaid rites. Both require faith on our part. To a certain extent we can adduce rational arguments in support of both, but in the last resort faith alone can satisfy us. One sometimes feels that nothing is gained by attendance at prayers, that one is unable to concentrate attention, one feels a sense of lethargy, and so on. These things cannot be reasoned out; they can be dispelled only by faith. The *Gita* recommends faith alone when it speaks of dispassionate action. An effort is never wasted. It is an act of faith to believe in the

ultimate triumph of truth in the face of failures, and to follow truth dispassionately. We should have the same attitude to spinning as to prayer. It is not for me to calculate how this much spinning would benefit me or the country. One may not see any immediate benefit from spinning but one must stick to one's belief that it is going to bring some benefit. The point is to learn to stick to our resolve. The two external and common activities of prayer and spinning are likely to develop this tenacity. If we are lax in these activities, when shall we learn to stand firm on truth?

I therefore appeal to all, young and old, not to neglect these two activities.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8053. Courtesy: Raojibhai N. Patel

108. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

SHOLAPUR,
Monday, Maha Vad 5 [February 21, 1927]

SISTERS,

I have your letter.

I find that carding and other work has been going on well. If you persevere in the same way, you will make good progress within a short time.

The effect of regular work is like that of regular food. It nourishes the soul. But, even as over-eating spoils one's health, so excessive work at a time wears out one's spirit.

We are in Sholapur today. It is a big city. There are five mills here. The biggest of them belongs to Morarji Gokuldas. His grandson Shantikumar is still a youth so far as age goes, but he has a great soul. He loves khadi and wears only khadi. I do not mean that this is his greatest virtue. He is sympathetic, generous, humble, devoted to God and truthful. He has the virtue that his name indicates, i.e., he is calmness incarnate. I am very glad that such a jewel amongst men is found in a multi-millionaire family. I was not acquainted with his wife. Yesterday, while I took my meal, I made her sit down by me and talked to her to my heart's content. I suggested to her that she should take to public work like her husband. I cited all of you as an example to her. Was I right in doing so or was it only my conceit? You alone

know whether all of you are devoted to service. Anyhow that is what escaped my lips. It is up to you to justify my statement.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3640

109. *LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

[*February 21, 1927*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I am returning herewith both the letters from Ghanshyamdas. Because I have faith in his word I am not afraid that he would marry again.

I want you to come to Belgaum on 25-26 and also to present yourself at the Ashram on the 11th. There is much work to be done at both the places. It would be worth the while if you could stay at the Ashram from the 9th to 13th. You may also stay with me at the time of the Gurukul [Convocation] when Ghanshyamdas too proposes to be present. It depends more on your own convenience in view of the other things you have to attend to.

What is Kamala doing? I am worried on her account. This does not mean you too should start worrying. She could perhaps settle down if we could arrange for her education. Let her learn as much English as she likes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2882

[1] *Vide* the succeeding item.

110. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SHOLAPUR,
Monday [*February 21, 1927*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have two letters from you. Because I trust your word I am not afraid of your marrying again. I trust you also in the matter of the Assembly. But in view of the prevailing atmosphere there it is difficult to remain absolutely independent.

On the question of *sangathan* I hold the same views that I have expressed. Organization is certainly not the remedy for the case, particulars of which you have sent to me. Here the remedy is either *tapascharya* or individual courage. As long as we remain cowards no wonder our women fall into the hands of the lecherous. I know of a Hindu prince in whose territory no young girl was safe and the husband and the father used to be helpless. But then this is a complicated problem. Please do come to the Gurukul if you can. I wish to have you with me for a fortnight; we cannot dispose of such matters in a day. In the meanwhile whatever my advice do what your inner voice bids you.

Blessings to your son and daughter-in-law.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

22 Gulbarga
23 Pandharpur
24-25 District Satara
26 Belgaum
27—March 3 Ratnagiri
4 Poona
5 Bombay
6-7 Akola
8 Bombay
9-14 Ashram

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6144. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Gandhiji was in Sholapur on this date.

111. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SHOLAPUR,
[*February 21, 1927*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Kindly go through the enclosed letter[2] and let me have your views on it.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Tour Programme:

26 Belgaum
27 Malvan (Distt. Ratnagiri)
28 Ratnagiri
1-2-3 Ratnagiri District
4 Poona
5 Bombay
6-7 Akola
8 Bombay
9-14 Ashram

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6145. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

112. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

ON TOUR,
GULBARGA,
February 22, 1927

DEAR SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS[3],

As it appears to be more convenient for you to handle English letters I am sending you this in English.

Though I have myself yet written nothing about currency matters, perhaps you are aware that I have been closely following the agitation[4], that is, as closely as I can, in spite of incessant travelling. I have been studying the question carefully and

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Presumably, the succeeding item

[3] Member of Hilton-Young Commission, the Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance

[4] Against the fixation of the rupee at 1s 6d gold (as recommended by the Hilton-Young Commission) instead of at 1s 4d gold (as proposed in the addressee's dissenting minute)

carrying on an active correspondence with experts chiefly Messrs Madon and Wadia. The latter has sent me a draft bill which I understand he has circulated among the members of the Assembly. Will you please let me know whether that Bill meets your approval?

If a pure gold standard is established, free mints opened, and a Reserve Bank established, does not the question of ratio disappear altogether? Will not things right themselves? Whereas if the ratio is fixed at 1 to 15 and all questions about gold, currency, mints and Reserve Bank shelved or decided in accordance with the recommendation of the Commission, will it not be worse than the existing state of things?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
BOMBAY

From a copy: C.W. 7825. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

113. LETTER TO B. F. MADON

GULBARGA,
February 22, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your latest letter for which I thank you. What do you say to this letter? At the time of replying please return the enclosure.

I note what you say about Mr. Shroff.

Do you not think that there is considerable force in what Prof. Wadia says, namely, that the ratio question should not be separated from the permanent question of standard; or do you say that since there is a statutory definition of the rupee in terms of gold, we should be entirely satisfied if the ratio is satisfactorily settled and the other recommendations[1] of the Commission either shelved or given effect to just as they are. In other words, if you had the choice what will you do?

Have the ratio fixed at 1 to 15 and the *status quo* retained in all other respects?

Or the ratio fixed at 1 to 50 and gold Bullion standard with the Reserve Bank mentioned in the Commission established?

[1] Embodied in Gold Standard and Reserve Bank of India Bill introduced in the Legislative Assembly on January 25, 1927

Or a pure gold standard established, mints reopened for coining gold mohors freely and a central bank given such as Prof. Wadia suggests, leaving the ratio undisturbed by any statutory action?

Have you read Messrs Wadia and Joshi's draft Bill?

From a microfilm: S.N. 12900

114. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

GULBARGA,
Maha Vad 6 [February 22, 1927][1]

PRIEST OF DHEDS AND BHILS,

Please do come, and do bring Dheds and Bhangis along with you. Please inform Jugatram or whoever is to be informed so that he may make the necessary arrangements. If they carry their food and bed with them as also a *lota*[2] and a rope and are prepared to sleep on the ground, they need not give any prior intimation.

We have just reached Gulbarga by the train we took at Sholapur. And I have got some time to write letters; I am stealing a few moments to indulge in a little fun with you, and also finish off some work by the way.

Hail, Thakkar Bapa, high priest of the lowly ones!

Whatever you would have from
BAPU

[PS.]

'Bapu' is certainly better than 'Mahatma'.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2711

[1] In 1927, Gandhiji was in Gulbarga on this date.

[2] A vessel, without handle or spout, for carrying water

115. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Tuesday, [February 22, 1927][1]

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I cannot decide about your competence to work in Jamshedpur. I have no experience of your knowledge of the English language. If you are confident of your ability for this work, you should go to Jamshedpur, look about yourself, and then make the final decision. As to the Ashram, you can come over at any time you please. There is plenty of work to do. But then you must be prepared to run around anywhere, and must also acquire sufficient experience of the technique of spinning. How far have you studied English?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tour Programme:

24-25 Satara	5 Bombay
26 Belgaum	6-7 Akola
27-March 3 District Ratnagiri	8 Bombay
4 Poona	9-14 Ashram

On the night of the 17th I shall entrain at Surat for Hardwar. I am not stopping over at Delhi; but it is on my way to Hardwar. I have to stay at the Gurukul for three days.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2354

116. SPEECH AT GULBARGA[2]

February 22, 1927

[Addressing] both the Hindus and Mussalmans gathered in the vast courtyard of the famous Sharana Basappa Temple which still bore the marks of the mob-fury of 1924[3], Gandhiji said:

[1] From Gandhiji's tour programme

[2] This was published under the title "Two Speeches".

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXV, pp. 45-8.

My heart burns with agony when I see young men, dressed in foreign caps and clothes. It is surprising that they do not see that, whilst the rupees that they spend on foreign caps are wasted, the annas that they need spend on khadi caps all go to the pockets of the poor. The man who shuts his eyes to the poor of his land and seeks to befriend the poor of the world must be mad indeed. God will find him guilty of arrogating to himself His function. The Hindu who recites his *Gayatri* regularly and the Mussalman who says his *namaz* five times a day are doing so in vain, if they have no corner in their hearts for the poor of their land. This is the message I would leave with the Hindus and Mussalmans of this place.

Much as I would like to pour out my agony before you, I know that it will be a cry in the wilderness. I therefore daily send out my prayer to God: 'Lord, do somehow deliver us from this conflagration.' But I should be untrue to my creed if as a believing and satyagrahi Hindu I disguised from you the feelings within me. When I went into the temple I was shown the spot where the idol was removed and the Nandi[1] was desecrated. I tell you the sight pained me. You may call me an idolator if you will. I see God everywhere and in everything. I tell you God would never approve of those acts of desecration. Whilst in Yeravda Jail, I read Maulana Shibli's *Life of the Prophet*, I also read *Usva-e-Sahaba* and can say that those who did the acts were wrong, that Islam never sanctions such things and they were guilty before God and man. When I heard of these things I was convinced that the matter had passed out of human hands. If there were men who devoted all their time and energy to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity I at least was one of them, but when my efforts did not seem to bear any fruit I threw myself on God. When the saints and godfearing people of Islam saw that there was discord and strife after the passing away of the Prophet, they dissociated themselves from them, migrated to Egypt, Persia and other lands and there retired into seclusion and sent up their prayers to God. It is these saints that have kept Islam alive. How often have I wished to retire thus into seclusion! And though I know that history will take note of my efforts as those of one who was a servant of God, who committed Himalayan blunders but who had also the courage to confess them and repent for them, I know that today I can do no better than be silent on this question.

[1] Sacred bull

But if you will not listen to me in that matter, you certainly will not disdain to think of the millions of the poor amongst you. Do you know that many of the spinners in Bihar, Bengal and the Punjab out of the 50,000 spinners in India for whom the A.I.S.A. finds employment, are Mussalmans? Have you read the heart-rending tales of woe of some of them? One of the workers in Gujarat asked a Mussalman woman aged 65 as to why she bothered to spin when spinning brought her only an anna per day. She said the fact that there was someone to give her an anna in return for the yarn she spun convinced her that there surely must be God somewhere. Fight, therefore, as much as you wish, but when a man like me appeals for help, pray forget your quarrels and your hostilities and do something for the cause he pleads.

Young India, 10-3-1927

117. LETTER TO K. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ON TOUR,
February 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I enclose the discharge document fair copied and duly signed by me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1

SJT. K. RAJAGOPALACHARI
KHADDAR STORES
GANDHI STREET
TIRUPATI
(CHITTORE DISTRICT)

From a photostat: G.N. 5670

118. *SPEECH AT PANDHARPUR*[1]

[February 23, 1927][2]

At Pandharpur the people in charge of the temple had somehow got the report that Gandhiji was going there with a European friend and they were terribly exercised as to what they should do if Gandhiji insisted on entering the temple with the friend as he did at Banaras. They must have been relieved to find that there was no such friend in our party. But Gandhiji made a pointed reference to this matter in his speech. He said:

I am sorry that neither the Buddhist friend who was with me at Banaras nor the 'untouchable' girl I have adopted is with me. But you may be sure that I should not have visited the temple without them if they had been with me. Had I left them out, I should have been guilty of insulting Vithoba Himself. I would not mind even an atheist entering our temple, for I know that God can take care of Himself. Who is there in the world who can insult the God in the image? But the lady friend who was with me is a Buddhist and therefore a Hindu. If she had no right to enter the temple, who else can have it? I have visited many places of pilgrimage and I have been pained to see hypocrisy and cupidity there. It is necessary first to purify the drunken and dissolute worshippers in charge of some of these temples. If the things continue as they are today, if we do not bestir ourselves and go through the necessary penance and cleansing and self-purification, I tell you that not even the 22 crores of Hindus can keep Hinduism alive. The Himalayas are spotlessly snow-white in virtue of the spotless glory of the countless sages who laid down their lives performing penance in their caves. Only such penance can save us and our religion from perdition today.

Young India, 10-3-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Gandhiji was at Pandharpur on this date; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 21-2-1927.

119. *HONOURABLE COMPROMISE*

Sir Mahomed Habibullah and his colleagues are to be congratulated upon having secured a settlement that is honourable to both parties. It is not the best that could be conceived, but it is the best that was possible. I doubt if any other deputation could have done more. The Class Areas Bill, which brought about the Conference and round which the battle raged, is dead and gone. The Right Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, who when the deputation sailed for South Africa was of all members the most communicative and had warned us not to expect much, did not conceal at the end of the labours of the Conference his satisfaction at the result. A perusal of the settlement warrants the satisfaction.

But like all compromises this one is not without its danger points. The dropping of the Class Areas Bill is balanced by repatriation, re-emerging as re-emigration. If the name is more dignified, it is also more dangerous. Repatriation could only be to India. Re-emigration can be to any country. The following sentence in the settlement clearly points to that interpretation: "The Union Government therefore will organize a scheme of assisted emigration to India or other countries where Western standards are not required." This assisted emigration to other countries I hold to be dangerous, for there is no knowing what may happen to the poor ignorant men going to an unknown land, where they would be utter strangers. Such countries as would take them would only be either Fiji or British Guiana. Neither has a good name in India. It is decidedly a disadvantage to have been party to assisted emigration to any other part of the world.

The good point about this assisted emigration is that whereas before the settlement the repatriates lost their domicile, the re-emigrants now retain it and lose it only if they absent themselves so long as to warrant the inference that there is no intention on their part to return to South Africa. How many assisted emigrants can hope to refund the assistance in money they might have received or how many can hope to return with their families is a different question. The non-forfeiture clause is clearly designed not so much to guarantee a substantial right as not to hurt national self-respect.

The annexure, containing a summary of "conclusions reached by the Round Table Conference on the Indian question in South

Africa", is a remarkable document betraying in every paragraph a heroic attempt to reconcile conflicting interests and sentiments. The industrious reader will have no difficulty in discovering hopeful paragraphs. I shall therefore content myself with drawing attention to a paragraph that is fraught with grave danger. The Union Government is "to take special steps under the Public Health Act for an investigation into the sanitary and housing conditions in and around Durban, which will include the question of the limitation of sale of municipal lands subject to restrictive conditions". I do not know what is aimed at in this paragraph, but my suspecting mind—and my suspicion is based upon previous bitter experience of interpretations, warranted and unwarranted, that a strong party places upon agreements with a weak party to the latter's disadvantage—conjures up all kinds of frightful consequences arising from this proposed committee and limitation. Already the Durban Corporation has been invested with powers which it has utilized for the suppression of its Indian citizens. So far as I know a committee can bring to light nothing that is not known to the Corporation or the Government. The appointment of an advisory committee of Indians may be simple padding. The Health Committee may bring in a hysterical report, as a previous committee to my knowledge has done, and limitations may be put upon the purchase of municipal lands by Indians which may cramp the Indian community residing in Durban. Nor do I like the paragraph which seems to imply that provincial Governments are at liberty to take any action they might against the Indian settlers without reference to the Central Government.

But the compromise is acceptable in spite of the dangers referred to by me, not so much for what has been actually achieved as for the almost sudden transformation of the atmosphere in South Africa from one of remorseless hostility towards Indians to that of a generous toleration and from complete social ostracism to that of admission of Indians to social functions. Mr. Andrews sends me a glowing account of the utmost cordiality with which the Indian members of the Deputation were received alike by the Government and the people, how local Indians were able to gain entry to the most fashionable hotel in Cape Town without any let or hindrance and how the Europeans in South Africa were flocking to him to know all about the Indian Deputation and the Indian question. If this atmosphere of goodwill and sociability is kept up and encouraged, the settlement can be used as a solid foundation for erecting a beautiful temple of freedom for the Indian settlers in South Africa. But the success of the settlement

very largely depends upon the selection of the Consul or the Commissioner who will be selected to represent the Government of India. He must be a person of eminence, great ability and great strength of character, and in my opinion, he must be an Indian. The very fact of his being an Indian will strike the imagination of the European population and raise the Indian settlers in European estimation. He will reach the heart of Indians in a way no Englishman, not even perhaps Mr. Andrews, can, and if a man can be selected who will command the equal esteem of the Union Government we need not fear the future. Such a man in my humble opinion is Mr. Srinivasa Sastri. I cannot conclude this hasty survey of the settlement without placing on record my deepest conviction that the happy result is predominantly due to the ceaseless and prayerful labours of that godly self-effacing Englishman, Charlie Andrews.

Young India, 24-2-1927

120. NOTES

A Simple Suggestion

During my tour I observe that at some of the meetings volunteers thoughtlessly begin distribution of papers, such as copies of addresses, etc., just after the guest has arrived and the address has begun to be read. They do not realize that this creates a fresh disturbance in already noisy and restless meetings. If papers are to be distributed, they should always be distributed before the proceedings commence. It is not even realized that if papers are distributed, they should be distributed to all who want them. In mass meetings such distribution is impossible unless thousands of copies are available. In my opinion this would mean an utterly useless waste of public money. Whatever is absolutely necessary will surely be printed by local papers and the public should be satisfied with what the papers give. If they are unable to follow the proceedings without the papers it would not be a bad plan to sell such papers when there would be no question of favouritism. All those who wish to possess copies can have them for a trifling charge to cover printing expenses and a small addition so as to form a contribution, however small, to the expense of organizing meetings.

Stewards of the Nation

Much trouble, time and money can be saved by a little forethought. As it is, I often notice a reckless waste of public funds in

connection with these meetings. Let organizers of all meetings, but especially of khadi meetings, realize that we are the poorest country in the world, millions of whom are semi-starved, if only because their earnings are less even than three pice per day. Let organizers therefore understand, as stewards for the nation, it is their duty to spend public funds like misers and never to spend a pie without thought and without necessity. Organizers of khadi meetings should further realize that every pice collected is a pice meant for the starving millions and so one pice means often a day's earning for a widow. They must not therefore spend where they need not. For instance, they spend money on paper decorations. This is no time for decorations. Let them save as much as they can by avoiding all decorations save only those which may be required to attract people's attention. In that case they can think of several artistic things which cost nothing or very little. Thus they can have flags and buntings out of waste khaddar. We are now going in for extensive tailoring in connection with khaddar sales. There is always much waste material in a tailor's shop which he throws away. Now every part of this waste can be used for buntings which unlike paper buntings can be preserved for further use.

Write Your Addresses

Flowers may be avoided altogether and yarn garlands may be presented. Yarn must not be damaged by being tied into knots. It can be presented in its natural condition so that it can be subsequently used for weaving or any similar purpose. Money can also be saved by avoiding the printing of addresses. The best calligraphist among the organizers can write out the address on simple handmade paper and the paper can be nicely sewn on to a piece of khaddar, or if a little volunteer boy or girl would embroider the letters on a piece of khaddar it would be still better, the thread for embroidery, too, being hand-spun. Such work will be at once artistic and even valuable. I have stolen the idea from the remarkable way in which Babu Mahendra Prasad's daughter Rama had embroidered for her father the address presented by the Chapra Municipality of which he is Chairman. It cost the Municipality nothing and I have become possessor of a work of art which will adorn the museum which Adhyapak Malkani has brought into being in the Gujarat National College.

Avoid Silver Caskets

Expensive caskets are not required, for I have no use for them nor have I any room to keep them in. Latterly I have been

putting to auction every expensive casket received by me and handing the proceeds to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Although these auctions have invariably proved profitable in that they have fetched much more than their intrinsic value it will not be proper to present caskets for the purpose of securing fancy prices. It will be a good exercise for organizers if they must give their khaddar addresses in caskets to find out something cheap, local and artistic.

Not a Pleasure Trip

Well has Gangadharrao said that mine is not a pleasure trip, but a business tour during which I expect to do substantial business for my principal *Daridranarayana*. Every function therefore should be in fitting with that setting. I have observed that often more local men travel with me than are necessary for the purpose of the mission and that motor-cars are hired without due regard to economy. Every item of expenditure should be previously and carefully thought out. Unless we do so we shall not raise into being an efficient, economical organization calculated to serve the starving millions and we shall be guilty of the same charge, no matter on however small a scale, of extravagance that we legitimately bring against the Government. Kitson burners should be avoided whenever possible. I notice, too, a lavish expenditure on feeding. Those who travel with me do not do so to be entertained. It is enough to provide clean lodging and clean food. Indeed I often feel like copying for the whole of my company the excellent example of Mr. Bharucha who always insists on carrying his own food with him. We spend much too much money and time upon food. It grieves me to see people sending for parcels of fruit from Bombay or Calcutta. Much of this expense is wholly unnecessary. Some fruit is no doubt an essential part of my dietary and unless obtainable locally, something has no doubt to be imported. But I am sure that the expense incurred in bringing fruit can at least be reduced by 75 per cent. 'But,' argue over-zealous friends, 'why should not people who love you express their regard in some such loving acts of service? They will not spend money otherwise, nor will they give you all the money that they spend for your personal comfort. Let them therefore have the joy of spending some little money for you.' The argument is no doubt flattering, but wholly unconvincing.

Transmutation into Service

If those who love cannot transfer their love to the thing for which I stand, their love is blind and of little value. I do not

know if one should live to provide mere enjoyment for friends. Friendship means loving mutual service, and sometimes it is a positive disservice to indulge one's friends and to expose them to temptations. And if there are friends who would spend lavishly for providing luxuries for me, but would not spend for the cause I espouse, it is my clear duty to resist such luxuries. Friends to be friends must first provide me with necessaries of life before they think of indulging me with luxuries; and khaddar work is a vital necessary of life for me, more vital than food. Reception Committees please note.

AUCTION OF GARLANDS

The foregoing paragraphs were written, or rather dictated at the halts before we reached Ahmednagar at which latter place, there was an imposing meeting where there were several addresses presented, the Municipal address being in a beautiful silver cylinder. The representatives of each body brought also expensive flower garlands. Mr. Firodia who presented the inevitable purse excused himself for its smallness by saying that Ahmednagar was a famine-ridden tract. When therefore I began my reply[1] I could not help noticing the contrast between the palatial surroundings, the expensive ceremonial and the statement of famine conditions. I told the audience that what was true of Ahmednagar was true of the whole of India. Was not India a famine-ridden land? But the fact did not prevent accumulation of wealth on the part of a few. We the city-dwellers lived upon the exploitation of the famine-stricken villagers and the Khaddar movement was intended somewhat to redress the wrong and to make some slight return to the millions whom we were exploiting. I therefore suggested that the acknowledgment of the fact that Ahmednagar was a famine area made it doubly the duty of its well-to-do citizens to give more rather than less. I told them also that it would ill become me to accept for myself such caskets and rich floral tributes. I told them further that believing as I did that plants were as much endowed with life as we were ourselves, I did not like the unnecessary plucking of a single flower. But in a place like Ahmednagar my dislike was heightened by the reminder that I was a self-chosen representative of the very famine-stricken millions whom Mr. Firodia had mentioned. Every rupee spent upon unnecessary things meant a deprivation of the livelihood of 16 famishing women and I therefore suggested that they

[1] *Vide* pp. 95-6 *supra*.

should auction the silver casket as also the flowers, and if my remarks went home they would pay not the market value of the casket and the flowers but they would pay for the sentiment that the things would carry with them. The auctioning was entrusted naturally to the Chairman of the Municipality, Khan Bahadur Dorabseth. The casket was knocked down to Sheth Magniramji the local philanthropist for Rs. 1,001 and the garlands and the bouquets were auctioned separately under the same able management and they fetched in all Rs. 502. The result of my appeal went beyond the meeting and the citizens seemed to catch the spirit of my address to them, and the purse of Rs. 1,700 for which Mr. Firodia had apologized went up to nearly Rs. 6,000 apart from a brisk sale of khadi at the meeting. Future organizers beware! I warn them that they need not present me with flowers and rich caskets, but if they do I shall assume that they are presented for the purpose of being auctioned and in order that their contribution to the poor people's fund may be substantially increased.

TILAK SWARAJ FUND

During the Maharashtra tour at one or two meetings I was asked what had become of the crore collected for Tilak Swaraj Fund.[1] The questioners had every right to put this question even though they might not have contributed a pie to the Fund. A public fund becomes public property and therefore every member of the public is entitled to know in detail the administration of such funds. I therefore answered the question fairly exhaustively. The gist of my answer will bear repetition although the question has been answered in these pages already.

The accounts have been published regularly by the All-India Congress Committee. Copies of the audited accounts can be had at any time from the Congress Secretaries or the Treasurers. Every pie has been accounted for. There is no doubt that in some instances those to whom funds were entrusted were not faithful to the trust, but that is as much as to say that the Congress like all human institutions is an imperfect body having in its fold all sorts of men. I know of no institution in the world which does not have dishonest agents. The Congress is no exception. But I can say this that no loss has been sustained beyond what a most careful merchant suffers. The little loss that had been sustained is due not to negligence, but has occurred in spite of

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Tilak Swaraj Fund, Pachora", 8-2-1927.

vigilant inspection and auditing. It should be further borne in mind that the Congress has had in Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and in Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj an incorruptible working Secretary and an incorruptible working Treasurer respectively. Moreover 75 per cent of the funds were administered locally by local representatives who had assisted in raising the funds and who were trusted by the people. Lastly, the largest amounts were mostly earmarked and controlled by the donors, subject no doubt to the conditions that they were to be used only for purposes coming within the programme of non-co-operation and the accounts were to be open to inspection by Congress agents. Personally, I have absolutely no regret about having raised the Fund and my conscience is clear as to its administration. Everything that was humanly possible to guard against fraud, maladministration or misappropriation was done. The Fund has served an immense national purpose. The tremendous organization that came into being all of a sudden could not have been created without this great national Fund to which both rich and poor contributed so handsomely.

All-India Cow-protection Association

The Secretary acknowledges further receipt of yarn as under:

Members' Yarn (yards)

11	Nathabhai Dahyabhai Patel	Sojitra	12,500
12	T. M. Kanal	Haliyal	24,000
13	Punabhai Mamaiya	Karachi	16,000
14	V. G. Joglekar	Hadvi	24,000
15	Patelukhana Rama Rao	Ramachandrapur	6,000
16	N. Bhavanishanker Rao	Bangalore	9,640
17	Ishvarlal Thakordas Nanavati	Surat	24,000

Nos. 5, 6, 8 and 10 have advanced their totals to 24,002, 24,000, 22,000 and 14,940 respectively.

Young India, 24-2-1927

121. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[Before *February 25, 1927*][1]

[CHI.] NARANDAS,

I have just got another letter from you.

About the Bhandar I have sent you a telegram to go over to Belgaum. You will be there on the 25th itself. I shall come only on the 26th.

Let me have your opinion about supplying spinning-wheels to Panch Talawdi. It would of course be convenient to run the department through Amreli [office]. Why no figures about the Kotak Bhandar? They were not there last time too.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7711. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

122. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[After *February 26, 1927*][2]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. Did you not have my letter telling you about my meeting with your father-in-law? Your father intends by the end of March to send you, Vidyawati and, if possible, Chandramukhi too to the Ashram.

Step up your study of the *Ramayana* and the *Gita* and never give up spinning. Recite Ramanama while plying the wheel.

Tulsi Maherji met me for the second time.

The region I am now touring is very lovely. It is called Konkan and forms part of Maharashtra; moreover, I am touring this district for the first time.

I have given my tour programme in my letter to your father.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3327

[1] & [2] Inferred from the contents

123. LAST PILGRIMAGE OF A MUMUKSHU[1]

We refer to the demise of a saintly individual as his last pilgrimage. The wise have regarded this world as an inn or a traveller's lodge; there for a while we stay and then walk on. The *Gita* says that the body is a *dharmakshetra*[2]. Shri Ranchhoddas Dharshi has gone from this *kshetra*. I knew him quite intimately. He lived in Karachi in recent years. He was a great devotee of Shrimad Rajchandra. Ranchhodbhai had perfect faith in the latter's teachings. I have seen him shedding tears of joy even at the mention of Raychandbhai. All those who knew him and came in touch with him will certainly feel grieved at his demise. As for himself, he has departed after fulfilling his mission. He always worked unobtrusively in the public life of Karachi. He did not care for fame; his only desire was to work. He had full faith in khadi and carried on the khadi work in Karachi with great enthusiasm. May his soul rest in peace and the members of his family be consoled.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-2-1927

124. LETTER TO LAURA I. FINCH

February 27, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter has been redirected to me from Sabarmati. As I am constantly on the move, you will pardon my dictating this letter. Both you and Mrs. Blair whom I know very well would be welcome at the Ashram whenever you both go there. For the most part I expect to be there between 9th and 14th of March. I should be delighted to give you personal welcome if you come during that time.

I would suggest you and Mrs. Blair carrying a mosquito net, not that there are many mosquitoes at the Ashram but it is wise

[1] Seeker of *moksha*, i. e., freedom from phenomenal existence as the goal of life

[2] Field of dharma

to be forearmed especially as we do not stock mosquito-curtains at the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi

From a microfilm: S.N. 12815

125. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Malvan,
February, 28 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have two letters from you.

I have no doubt in my mind that a vow is like a rudder—a life regulator. And just as a rudderless ship is lost, so is a life without a vow a lost life. For after all a vow means a religious determination to carry out a decision for self-restraint even at the cost of one's life. I should therefore welcome your desire to take what is perhaps the supremest vow for a man or a woman. But if it is taken let it be taken after the maturest deliberation. It would be wrong on my part to prevent you from taking the vow, if you are clear about the necessity of taking it. Not to take the vow is to trust one's little self. To take it is to distrust oneself and to trust only God. I know where I should have been if I had not taken the vows I have.

But there is the other side, i.e., Andrews's. He says: "I do not know that the voice within is always the voice of God. What I may hold to be right today may be found to be wrong tomorrow. I must therefore hold myself free to do the will of God as I discover it from moment to moment." This attitude has answered his purpose. I should be undone. I see a fallacy behind A's argument. He does not. So it sustains him. Fallacy, error and the like are relative terms. What is good for one may not be good for all even though Truth is one for all time. The difficulty lies in our hopeless ignorance of Truth. Cruel God has enabled us to see that Truth is one and nothing else is; but He has disabled us for knowing its content.

If therefore you feel the call within to take the vow and if you feel it will make you feel freer, you shall take it. Nothing need be done in haste.

You must keep your health. Of course you will always starve when you feel the slightest touch of fullness or indigestion. Even

weakness is preferable to apparent strength if it is accompanied by indigestion or even a feeling of fullness.

You must not worry about your Hindi. You are doing all you can. The rest must lie in the hands of God. A change may be necessary after we meet. The fact evidently is that you must not combine two things—learning Hindi and teaching charkha. It evidently exhausts you. And you have not been helped to the extent you needed. However the experiences you have gained are inestimable and I am satisfied.

I have only now got Ramachandra's letter. I must see what can be done when I am there.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

I have no time even for revising this important letter.

From the original: C.W. 5207. Courtesy: Mirabehn.

126. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

MALVAN,
Maha Vad 11 [February 28, 1927]

SISTERS,

This is the last letter I write to you, for next Monday I should be on my way back home.

In my tours I always address women's meetings. Consequently I keep learning new things about women. I realize that women hold the key to swaraj. But who will awaken them? Many women have little to do. Who will make them industrious? Mothers spoil their children from birth. Who will prevent them? They load their children with ornaments and clothes of all kinds. They get their girls married quite young. They give them in marriage to old men. When I look at the jewels on women, I feel very annoyed. Who will explain to them that real beauty lies in the heart and not in these ornaments? I can write on many such matters. But how can all this be set right? It can be done only when a brilliant and dynamic Draupadi rises from amongst women. You have to try and get the necessary qualifications. Make up your mind about it and then have patience. One can achieve nothing by being in too great a hurry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3641

127. LETTER TO N. M. KHARE

MALVAN,
Monday [February 28, 1927]

BHAI PANDITJI,

Please go through the letter from Nanabhai which I have forwarded to Chi. Manilal. If you can find the time, please go there a day in advance and satisfy Nanabhai. We must have the minimum rituals. Please make it a point that the ceremony does not stretch beyond an hour. Though of course you should do all that ought to be done. Please have two copies of the [marriage] vow, one for each of them. We shall not have to solemnize such marriages. We cannot refuse if other friends want it. Hence this procedure and so on. Please think over it and try to make it as solemn and sacred as possible. Consult Kaka; we might add to or amend it if necessary.

I think we should start the ceremony with prayers and devotional songs and also conclude it in like manner. Consult Kaka about this too; if we decide to do so, what *bhajans* we should have, what *slokas* we should recite in our prayers, etc. Not the usual prayers that we offer daily but if you can find out some which would specially suit the occasion.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 250. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

128. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[February 28, 1927][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

This should reach you on Wednesday.

Maganlal writes to me that you would board the train in Bombay. You have to leave there on Friday. On Saturday morning I shall be in Poona. Leaving there at 10, I shall join you at Kalyan. I have a meeting at Poona in the morning.

Herewith letters from Nanabhai and Sushila, for your information. I think you should honour their wish to have you at

[1] From the reference to Panditji; *vide* the preceding letter.

Akola for some days. Vijayalakshmi would naturally want to know you; she is your mother-in-law.

You should not be angry nor should you worry over what Sushila writes about jewels and dresses; I have tried to encourage all the good traits she has cultivated. But I have not bound her to anything. You will influence her the way you would like to, and take such liberties as you please with her consent.

The vow to be taken at the time of the marriage ceremony is available with Panditji. I wish you would get it in advance, think over it and understand it. May you be always ready to observe the vow and may God grant you the strength for it.

I know marriage begins a new life. Therefore though I do not get the time to write to you more often or at greater length, I am always thinking about you.

Even if you stay over at Akola I must leave on Monday. I have plenty of work waiting for me at the Ashram.

Make a note of whatever you want to ask me or tell me, because after this meeting we may perhaps not meet again, may be never in our lives. In the month of March, when you will proceed to South Africa, I do not know where I may be wandering. I see therefore that whatever you have to ask should be done mainly on the train. On Sunday we shall be busy with the wedding ceremony. Of course there may not be much fuss. There would be a solemn atmosphere on the day and also peace all round. But I am a busy man and it is quite likely that we shall get little time to ourselves.

In his letter Nanabhai asks for Panditji to go there a day in advance. Panditji may do so if he can. Just the same I am dropping a line to Nanabhai assuring him that this should not be necessary. He [Panditji] should however spare a day if possible.

Bring with you two copies of the *Gita,* two of the [*Ashram*] *Bhajanavali* and a couple of taklis.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1124. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

129. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

[*February 28, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. You may not need Panditji to go there in advance. All the same I have written to him that he should reach a day earlier if he could.

You must not put up any kind of elaborate decorations or other fanfare. Please spend as little as possible on pandals, etc. It would look well to have the marriage ceremony in the open; it would be enough if there is shade.

There is a religious atmosphere about your house, no doubt; but I wish it is particularly so during these days.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have written to Manilal to spend a few days at Akola if he can. If he does it might become necessary to let them have a separate room. Perhaps it is essential that immediately after marriage they live together for some days.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1129. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

130. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN I. MASHRUWALA

Monday [*February 28, 1927*][2]

CHI. SUSHILA,

So at long last I have a letter from you written with much nervousness. I wish you could get into the practice of writing to me without shrinking.

On Sunday Manilal and you, Nanabhai and Vijayalakshmi, myself and Ba will have to observe fast till the marriage ceremony is over, i.e., up to about 12 noon. Devote all that time to contemplating on dharma and to understanding the significance of marriage. People are now totally oblivious of the fact that marriage is

[1] From the reference to Panditji; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] From the reference to the marriage vow; *vide* "Letter to N. M. Khare", 28-2-1927; also "Letter to Manilal Gandhi," 28-2-1927.

not a license, it is a discipline. A person—man or woman—has recourse to marriage to regulate, to circumscribe the desire one feels. This is the distinction between man and beast. Thus though pursuit of pleasure results from marriage, the Shastras suggest that the couple should gradually shake off its hold over them. Even those relationships which are formed for pleasure, the Shastras try to use for the attainment of *moksha*. They enjoin them to this end. So much so that seekers have described the relationship between the individual self and the Supreme Self on the analogy of marital union. The concept of purity underlies conjugal love just as much as the communion of an individual with God. Thus marriage can become a great help in rendering social service. May your marriage prove so.

I am trying to let you have in advance a copy of the marriage vow. If you get it ponder over it. May God grant you the strength to fulfil it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1125. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

131. *SPEECH AT LANJE*[1]

February 28, 1927

I do not know whether I should pity you or myself for keeping you waiting until this hour[2]. But you know we have done what the yogi of the *Gita* does. "The night of sleep of the ordinary mortals is a day of wakefulness for the yogi." I congratulate you on your yoga, but you will better deserve my congratulations if you show that you are true yogis by contributing for the poor, and by purchasing our khadi.

Young India, 10-3-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Gandhiji reached Lanje after midnight.

132. *SPEECH AT RATNAGIRI*[1]

[March 1, 1927][2]

After describing Ratnagiri as a place of pilgrimage for the whole of India, as it was Lokamanya's birth-place, and after a feeling reference to Sjt. V. D. Savarkar, Gandhiji said:

You know Lokamanya's swaraj *mantra*. I do not think there has been any follower of Lokamanya who has tried to carry out the *mantra* more than I. There may be many whose efforts are equal to mine, but no one can claim to have put forth greater effort. For I know that not only is swaraj our birthright, but that it is our sacred duty to win it. For in so far as we are removed from swaraj we are removed from manhood. A proper manifestation of all our powers is impossible without swaraj. And the swaraj that Lokamanya had in view was not the swaraj for Ratnagiri people or for Maharashtrians, but for the whole of India, poor as well as rich, and swaraj has no meaning for the poor unless they have enough to eat. Why should we not serve our mills, you ask. Sheth Narottam Morarji, the owner of the Sholapur mills is a friend of mine, and I was the guest of his son[3] who showered his affection on me. But does that mean that I must use cloth from the Sholapur mills and serve that "poor" Sheth Narottam and his son? Even they will not say that I would be serving the poor by using their cloth.

I have been told everywhere that Konkan is poor. If you are poor, the situation must be unbearable for you. You say that poor people from your parts go to Bombay and earn a living there. Do you know the price that they have to pay for that living? They live in hovels without light and air, a few feet by a few feet, where several men and women are huddled together without regard for their bodily cleanliness or decency. Are you ready to send your mothers and sisters to live under such conditions? Do you not agree that the women that go to the Bombay mills are your mothers and sisters and the men your brothers? Are you prepared to see your brothers and sisters take to a life of drunkenness and shame and return home and spread the in-

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the "Weekly Letter" in *Young India*, 10-3-1927

[3] Shantikumar; *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 21-2-1927.

fection of their vices? Is it worth while paying this terrible price for the eight annas they manage to earn there?

Our cattle are destroyed because we do not know true cow-protection and our villages are ruined because we do not know true economics and sociology. The charkha can stop that ruinous process. Do you know the daily income per head of our country? Our economists say that it is one anna and six pies, though even that is misleading. If someone were to work out the average depth of a river as four feet from the fact that the river was six feet deep in certain places and two feet in others, and proceeded to ford it, would he not be drowned? That is how statistics mislead. The average income is worked out from the figures of the income of the poor man as also of the Viceroy and the millionaires. The actual income will therefore be hardly three pice per head. Now if I supplement that income by even three pice with the help of the charkha, am I not right in calling the charkha my cow of plenty? Some people attribute superhuman powers to me, some say I have an extraordinary character. God alone knows what I am. It is also possible to disagree about the efficacy of satyagraha, but I do not think there is any reason for disagreement on these obvious facts about the charkha. If someone convinces me today that there is no poverty in India, that there are few in India who starve for want of even a few pice a day, I shall own myself to have been mistaken and shall destroy the spinning-wheel.

I ask you therefore to bear in mind what you mean when you say that Konkan is poor. If you are really poor there is nothing like the wheel which can cure your impoverishment and which is a safeguard for the honour of your women. Seek ye first the charkha and its concomitants and everything else will be added unto you. How can you disregard a thing which is of such a national and universal character? Does it behove the followers of Lokamanya to deride or reject the wheel?

But you will ask, as a youth who sought to heckle me asked, "If Lokamanya liked this thing, why did he not ask the country to take it up?" Well, I cannot be taken in by your question. Whether or not Lokamanya had khadi in mind when he defined swadeshi, surely his swadeshi cannot but include khadi. I am but the heir of Lokamanya, and if I do not add to the patrimony he has left me, I would not be a worthy son of a worthy father. I pondered well over Lokamanya's message, applied my many years' experience to it and came to the conclusion that Lokamanya's message must mean khadi. Do you know what he used to

do? I am telling you of an incident that happened a short time before his death. When Maulana Shaukat Ali approached him as regards the Khilafat question, Lokamanya said to him: "I shall put my signature to whatever Gandhi signs, for I trust to his better knowledge in this matter." Supposing therefore Lokamanya had not khadi in mind when he advised swadeshi, what does it matter? Supposing we were manufacturing spectacles here and someone were to say, "We cannot use them, Lokamanya did not advise the use thereof", would it be proper? We would dismiss him as a literalist, *Vedavadarata* as the *Gita* would describe him. As the literalist interpreter of the Vedas does not grasp the infinite meaning of the Vedas, even so these literalist interpreters of Lokamanya's message miss its infinite power.

But someone comes and says, "When Mussalmans are converting us who is going to listen to your khadi?" Have you, I ask, become so impotent that you will be Mussalmans because someone compels you to embrace Islam? If you have true dharma in you, no one dare violate it. But I want to protect even our dharma by means of khadi. For khadi means the service not only of Hindu but of Mussalman women. A Maulvi in Bengal went and asked some of those women not to spin, on the ground that the khadi movement was a Hindu movement. They listened to him for a couple of days, but the third day they came asking for cotton. For what could they do? They could not go on starving and the Maulvi had no food to offer them. The learned author of the *Mahabharata* has described Vishvamitra, the sage, as ready to eat what was forbidden to him and even to steal, when he was oppressed by the pangs of hunger. One cannot say what a hungry man or woman would not stoop to. I therefore tell you that you must take to khadi if only to alleviate the poverty and safeguard the honour of your women.

I am asked to take part in the *shuddhi* movement. How can I, when I wish that its Muslim and Christian counterparts should also cease? It is unthinkable that a man will become good or attain salvation only if he embraces a particular religion—Hinduism, Christianity or Islam. Purity of character and salvation depend on the purity of heart. I therefore say to the Hindus, "Do whatever you like, but don't ask a man like me, who has come to his conclusions after the maturest thinking, to take up what he cannot." Man's capacity is after all limited. I can do what is within my power, not what is beyond it. I cannot do a hundred or even half a dozen things at a time. I would think myself blessed even if I can do one thing well at a time. If you agree with

me that the charkha is the best *sangathan* that is possible, give me as much help as you can render.

Young India, 17-3-1927

133. DISCUSSION WITH V. D. SAVARKAR[1]

March 1, 1927

Sjt. Savarkar asked Gandhiji to clear his attitude about untouchability and *shuddhi*. Gandhiji cleared some of the misrepresentations and said:

We cannot have long talk today, but you know my regard for you as a lover of truth and as one who would lay down his life for the sake of truth. Besides, our goal is ultimately one and I would like you to correspond with me as regards all points of difference between us. And more. I know that you cannot go out of Ratnagiri and I would not mind finding out two or three days to come and stay with you if necessary to discuss these things to our satisfaction.[2]

Young India, 17-3-1927

134. LETTER TO P. A. WADIA

ON TOUR,
MAHAD,
March 2, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is the result of my correspondence with Mr. Madon. There seems to be much force in Mr. Madon's reasoning. I send you a copy of my letter to Mr. Madon. I shall anxiously await your reply. I now fancy that I am getting enough material to enable me to come to a decision.

I reproduce my itinerary for ready reference:

4th to 5th March Poona, care Swarajya Office, 6, Sukrawar Peth
6th to 7th Akola, care Nanabhai Mashruwala
8th to 14th Ashram, Sabarmati
15th to 17th Bardoli Taluk

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", Gandhiji had called on V. D. Savarkar who was ailing at his residence in Ratnagiri.

[2] Savarkar replied: "I thank you, but you are free and I am bound, and I don't want to put you in the same case as I. But I will correspond with you,"

18th to 21st Gurukul Kangri (District Bijnor)
22nd to the end of the month in Karnatak and also upto 4th April Karnatak.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1
PRO. P. A. WADIA
HORMAZD VILLA
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12903

135. RAMACHANDRA LIFT

After having advertised the Ramachandra Lift in these pages I have been purposely silent about it all these weeks because it was necessary to ensure a continuous supply of these lifts on the cheapest terms possible before further notice could be taken of this ingenious invention. I have much pleasure now in informing the reader that Sjt. Ramachandra Aiyer has placed himself entirely at the disposal of the Ashram, made over his patent rights to the Ashram subject to a certain royalty being paid to him for every lift up to 1,000 lifts. Lifts can now be had on the following terms:

Cost of the lift f.o.r. Sabarmati:

For 30 ft. depth, Rs. 125; for 35 ft. depth, Rs. 132; for 40 ft. depth, Rs. 139 and so on; Rs. 7 extra for every additional 5 ft. depth.

These quotations are for such lifts as contain buckets up to 32 gallons. For buckets of greater sizes special quotations will be offered.

(Prices are subject to market fluctuations and may vary without notice.)

For local governments, zamindars, native States and co-operative societies who are willing to introduce the lift in their jurisdictions on a large scale, special quotations will be supplied on application for orders of 50 lifts or over at a time. A reduction in the prices will be made according to saving in the charges for packing, despatching, etc.

When sending orders, the intending purchaser should supply the maximum depth of the well as measured from the silt to the point of discharge, and mention the size of bucket required.

All orders must accompany 50 per cent cash and for the balance, the articles will be sent per V.P.P. The delivery of the lift will be made nearly a month after the receipt of money in order of precedence.

There is no profit made by the Ashram, only cost price up to delivery is charged. The lift that has been now at work at the Ashram has proved entirely satisfactory and the problem at the Ashram is what use to make of the superfluous bulls. An illustrative catalogue giving full details has been printed. Anyone requiring further information can have the catalogue on sending to the Ashram Manager one anna postage stamp. All those who corresponded with Sjt. Ramachandra Aiyer or with me may now have their lifts on complying with the foregoing terms.

Young India, 3-3-1927

136. IS INDIA PROHIBITIONIST?

An English friend who is anxious to undertake prohibition work for India writes:[1]

> I know that what everyone will say to me is that the Indians themselves have shown no overpowering desire for prohibition and that as *they* have not organized any movement for this, it is interference on our part to move in the matter. Moreover of all the Councils only one or two have declared for prohibition. Already people are saying this to me. I always point them to the Non-co-operation movement when the volunteers picketed the liquor shops. But when they say that was five years ago and they have shown no great enthusiasm lately, what is the answer?

The puzzle the friend asks me to solve is not new. The question is bound to occur to one who does not know the history of the total prohibition movement in India. And a stranger coming in our midst is bound to ask himself, 'If India wants total prohibition, why does she not agitate for it as she does for many other things?' One observes that people do not agitate when they feel absolutely helpless. It is our helplessness which prevents us from agitating beyond having resolutions by temperance societies and sometimes petitions to the Legislative bodies. The cry for swaraj came out of a realization of growing helplessness in matters of paramount importance to our well-being. Take the military expenditure. Everyone recognizes that much of it is a criminal waste of money collected from the starving millions. Instead of agitating for reduction in military expenditure, we agitate for

[1] The reference is to Muriel Lester; *vide* "Letter to Muriel Lester", 17-3-1927.

swaraj, the argument being that nothing is possible without swaraj. Who can say that there is no great deal of truth in the argument? When in 1920 we felt that we were getting swaraj, we took the law into our own hands, we successfully picketed the liquor shops and the Government was frightened to notice an immediate fall in the liquor revenue. Liquor dealers trembled in their shoes and for a moment it appeared as if the drink evil had gone. Unfortunately the party of non-violence had not attained sufficient control over the people. Violence broke out. It was discovered that pickets did not everywhere carry out the instructions to create a blockade without resort to violence or threats to use it. The picketing had therefore to be suspended.

But the history of 1920-21 shows in unmistakable terms what India would do if she had the power and what she did do when she thought that she had it. Let it be further borne in mind that millions of Indians are teetotallers by religion and by habit. Millions therefore cannot possibly be interested in keeping up the nefarious liquor traffic. Thus in so far as it can be said that there is no agitation in India in favour of total prohibition, absence of agitation is due not to want of desire on the part of the people to secure total prohibition, but it is due to a consciousness of helplessness and to the certain knowledge that it is an integral part of the struggle for swaraj.

The very fact that it is necessary for any Englishman to defend liquor revenue on the grounds that there is no agitation among us for total prohibition, makes out an irresistible case for swaraj. For, it shows utter ignorance of Indian conditions where the opinion is honestly held. There is no agitation on the part of the people against malaria and scores of other diseases. Is that any reason for taking no measures for eradicating malaria and other diseases? In order to deal with a known evil, no agitation should be necessary for taking prompt measures. The drink and the drug evil is in many respects infinitely worse than the evil caused by malaria and the like; for, whilst the latter only injures the body, the former saps both body and soul. The drink revenue, military expenditure and the Lancashire's exploitation of India through its calico, constitute the threefold wrong done by British rule to India. When Englishmen realize that it is sinful to trade upon the drink habit of the poor labourers of India, that it is sinful to dump down English and other foreign calico on the Indian soil when India's starving millions can easily produce during their spare hours all the cloth needed for her requirements, and when they realize that it is sinful to impose a terrific military

burden upon India under the ostensible purpose of defending her borders but in reality for the sake of holding her people under subjection against their will, it would be a complete demonstration of change of heart, and co-operation on a basis of absolute equality will become a real possibility. The only agitation therefore that India can carry on is to end the system which makes these wrongs possible, which is the same thing as saying that the agitation for swaraj is the agitation for the removal of these wrongs. This removal is the acid test, in my opinion, of English sincerity.

Young India, 3-3-1927

137. ANCIENT WISDOM

Here is wisdom sent to me by the friend whom I have already introduced to the readers of these columns:

> That which is incomplete becomes complete.
> The crooked becomes straight.
> The empty becomes full.
> The worn-out becomes new.
> He who obtains has little.
> He who scatters has much.
> That is why the self-controlled man holds to unity and brings it into manifestation for men.
> He looks not at self, therefore he sees clearly.
> He asserts not himself, therefore he shines.
> He boasts not himself, therefore he has merit.
> He glorifies not himself, therefore he endures.
> The Master indeed does not strive, yet no one in the world can strive against him.
> The words of the Ancients were not empty words.
> "That which is incomplete becomes complete."

Young India, 3-3-1927

138. CO-OPERATIVE KHADI PURCHASE

Sjt. K. A. Nair writes as follows:[1]

I commend this ingenious device for the adoption of khadi lovers. This method enables one to buy khadi without having to pay for it at once. But the unfortunate member of this co-operative club, as it may be called, whose name comes last in the raffle gains no advantage from his investment save that he will have learnt the art of buying khadi in a thrifty manner. The club will be his savings bank and at the end of a year he is in a position to buy all his khadi worth Rs. 24 without feeling the pinch. If the arrangement can be extended to a longer period, as it well may be by easy adjustment, all can receive the same advantage. But perhaps the attraction lies in the uncertainty of advantage and in the trifling nature of the disadvantage. The success of this scheme lies entirely in the honesty of the members. For, if the member who has received his Rs. 24 worth of khadi ceases to pay his contributions, the remaining ones become the losers. Therefore if this scheme has to work inexpensively and yet effectively, the membership must be necessarily restricted and confined only to those who know one another and are also perhaps working in a common institution or office so as to minimize the risk of loss by death or dishonesty. I hope that the example set by Sjt. Nair and his friends will be copied by others.

Young India, 3-3-1927

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, a member of the All-India Spinners' Association had organized a raffle, with 12 members, each paying Rs. 2, monthly, for twelve months, all agreeing that the winner each month will be given khadi cloth worth Rs. 24 according to his taste from a Khadi Bhandar instead of Rs. 24 in cash.

139. SPEECH AT VAISYA VIDYASHRAM, SASAVANE[1]

[*March 3, 1927*][2]

I had come entirely unprepared for these tokens of love,[3]—love not only for me, but for the poor, and my greatest joy is due to the shape these tokens have taken. The donation of Rs. 63-3-0[4] reminds me of a sacred donation that I received from the late Swami Shraddhanand for my work in South Africa and which represented the value of the labour of love rendered by his *brahmacharis*. It is worth more than millions to me and it makes my responsibility for utilizing the funds all the greater. Your yarn also is worth its weight in gold, for what is the value of gold, but the price of labour spent in obtaining it? Is your labour any the less? And it is more sacred inasmuch as it has been all done in the spirit of sacrifice.

The rest of the speech was as a Vaisya talking to Vaisya boys.

With *brahmacharya* as your shield and buckler you should find no difficulty in entering any walk of life, and if you will follow the vocation natural to you—agriculture, cow-protection, and commerce—in the right way, you will serve both your community and the country. But beware that your pursuit of these professions may not become synonymous with exploitation as it is today. If you desire to take off the sinister aspect of greedy commerce, you will have to make it centre round the charkha. There are exploiters enough on this earth. If we also follow suit, we shall have to seek for our victims on other planets. Khadi is the only wholesome national trade that we can pursue and as Vaisyas I ask you not to neglect it.

There were garlands . . . but Gandhiji did not auction them. Nor did he make any appeal for collections. He said:

I had not come on a business visit here. But you have given me more than enough.

Young India, 17-3-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the "Weekly Letter" in *Young India*, 10-3-1927

[3] The inmates of the Vidyashram, an institution for imparting vocational training to unmarried Vaisya boys, had presented to Gandhiji 1,60,000 yards of hand-spun yarn, a piece of hand-woven cloth, Rs. 501 collected from the Vaisya community and Rs. 190 from the neighbouring village.

[4] Being the value of ghee, sugar, milk and wheat which the boys had denied themselves for one week for Deshbandhu Fund

140. *LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI*[1]

[Before *March 4, 1927*][2]

Besides these I want a takli with a case to be presented to the bride and the groom. Manilal does not spin on the takli; so Sushila alone is to be given one. Ask Manilal if he would ply one so that I may give one to him also. Please send two. Manilal should himself bring along these articles when he comes.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Please look after Professor Jugalkishore.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7765. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

141. *SPEECH AT VAISYA VIDYASHRAM GYMNASIUM*[3]

[*March 4, 1927*]

In the morning Gandhiji performed the installation ceremony of the image of Maruti[4] as part of their gymnasium. He said:

I install this image of Maruti here, not merely because Maruti had the strength of a giant. Even Ravana had that strength. But Maruti had the strength of soul, and his physical strength was only a manifestation of his spiritual strength which in its turn was the direct fruit of his exclusive devotion to Rama and his *brahmacharya*. May you therefore be like Maruti of matchless valour born out of your *brahmacharya* and may that valour be dedicated to the service of the Motherland.

Young India, 17-3-1927

[1] Only the concluding paragraph of this letter is available.

[2] From the reference to wedding gifts for Manilal who was to leave for Akola on 4-3-1927.

[3] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[4] Another name of Hanuman

142. SPEECHES AT POONA[1]

[*March 4, 1927*][2]

[Concluding his Maharashtra tour Gandhiji addressed a public meeting at Reay Market. He said:]

Hanuman tore open his heart and showed that there was nothing there but Ramanama. I have none of the power of Hanuman to tear open my heart, but if any of you feel inclined to do it, I assure you you will find nothing here but love for Rama whom I see face to face in the starving millions of India.

Gandhiji . . . [addressed a students' meeting] at about midnight. The cry for "English, English" was there . . . Gandhiji, pained as he was by it, acceeded to the demand because of his overflowing love for the students. He said:

If I cannot make myself understood to Poona students, it is my misfortune, the misfortune of my country, and shall I say your misfortune?

But he acceeded to the students' clamour for English only so far as he had to express his regret for being late at the meeting . . . When he saw that he had succeeded in gaining their ear, he delivered the message itself in Hindi. He said:

It is possible that my message if delivered in English might get more silver from you, and it is probable that you might understand me better. But I hold my message to be far superior to myself and far superior to the vehicle through which it is expressed. It has a power all its own, and I hope it will produce an impression on the youth of India. Whether it will produce an impression in my lifetime or not, I do not care, but my faith is immovable, and as the days roll on and as the agony of the masses becomes prolonged, it will burn itself into the heart of every Indian who has a heart to respond to the message. You must understand, that at a time of my life when I should be enjoying my well-earned rest, I am not going about from one end of the country to the other for nothing. It is because I feel within myself with increasing force every day the strength of my conviction that I

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-3-1927

must try until the end of my days to reach it to as many ears and hearts as possible.

The rest was a brief history of the charkha movement, which he had conceived as early as 1908 before he had actually seen a charkha, and the duty of the student world to those at the cost of whose moral and material ruin they were receiving their education.

You may, if you will, go on receiving that education, but do at least make a decent return for it. I know you have not taken to khadi, not because you are perverse, but because you lack the conviction that there is anything like the stupendous problem of poverty and unemployment, whose existence I have been declaring from the housetops. The King of Siam refused to believe Lord Curzon when he said to him that he was coming from a country where rivers were frozen for a part of the year. I assure you I am describing to you conditions I have seen with my own eyes when I say that 30 million people in our land have to go without a decent meal a day.

The rest of the speech was on *brahmacharya*, a thing that comes uppermost to Gandhiji's lips whenever he finds himself amongst students. Rubbing the thing home into them, he said:

It is as easy as it appears to be difficult, for *brahmacharya* is a quality of the soul; and your souls are not dead but slumbering. They are only waiting to be aroused. It seems difficult to arouse them because we have become unbelievers. It will be easy as soon as you have faith, for with faith comes God's grace. Then it no longer remains a matter of effort and trouble, but of joy and peace. I tell you this as I have known the joy of it.

Young India, 24-3-1927

143. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Sunday [*March 6, 1927*][1]

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have come to Akola for a day to marry Manilal to a niece of Kishorelal Mashruwala. I leave for the Ashram tonight. I hope you are making steady progress.

Arrangements are being made to send you as much as possible out of the 50,000 you ask. The hawking commission is not possible.

[1] From the reference to Manilal's wedding

It is paid under the rules only to professional hawkers for their maintenance. If we stretch the rule, we should be overwhelmed. The rules were framed to encourage hawking for a livelihood.

I do hope that you are all now past the danger zone.

How is Tarini?

I am at the Ashram from 8th to 14th March, and then 15-17 Bardoli, 19-21 Gurukul Kangri, District Bijnor, and then I proceed to Karnatak where perhaps it is better to locate me in Belgaum though I shall be wandering far and near.

With love to you all,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1631

144. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 7, 1927

CHI. MIRA

I have your two letters.

This is early morning. I am sitting in a third-class carriage at Bhusaval with Ba, Sushila, Manilal's wife, Manilal, Ramdas, Mahadev and Panditji who came to perform the marriage ceremony. The wedding was of the simplest character—no presents were accepted, no expense incurred.

To gain one more day, I decided to travel during my silence. I am travelling third class because I must not spend on second class for Manilal and his wife and I do not want to cut myself off from the new addition the very first day of her joining the family. And as I have about six days of rest at the Ashram in front of me, and as this is an easy third-class journey, I do not mind it; on the contrary I like it.[1]

I shall read your corrections in the autobiography when I reach the Ashram. I had anticipated your many corrections in the chapters that had not been previously seen by you.[2]

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5208. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] "From now onwards Bapu travelled third class more and more frequently and finally it became an unbreakable rule." (Mirabehn)

[2] "Certain chapters had been published in *Young India* without my seeing them, because of postal difficulties, and I had to correct them afterwards for the book."

145. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA AND OTHERS

Monday [March 7, 1927][1]

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA, CHANDAN, TARA, VASANT,

I have your letters. Every day I think of writing to you, but where could I get the time? Now *Navajivan* is as good as a letter from me to everyone; you have to be content with it. This too I write on a train, on my way to the Ashram.

I agree you had to go to Rajkot though I did not like your running away. It would have been much better if you could have stayed on at the Ashram. Now let me know what you do there about your studies, etc.

Manibehn writes to me that Chi. Prabha has started spinning. How nice if she would do regular spinning and carding and wear khadi.

When are you likely to return? I shall be at the Ashram till the 14th. You girls should all write to me. Write clear bold letters and in ink.

Write to me everything, when you get up, what you read, whether or not you take walks, etc. Does Vasant feel any more exhaustion? There she must be keeping better health than at the Ashram. Never let slip whatever good you have acquired in the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4905. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha Desai

[1] Gandhiji travelled from Akola to Ahmedabad on March 7, 1927; *vide* also the preceding item.

146. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO MANILAL GANDHI[1]

[*March 7, 1927*]

Now that I have got you married and introduced you [to your wife] it is for you to take the initiative and run your own house. Go and sit near Sushila. See what clothes she has got, find out her wishes and then make a note of what she needs. This will break the ice and things will get moving. Or you may try some other approach. Or shall I ask her to come near you and . . .[2] tell the others to move away?

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 4718

147. UNTOUCHABILITY, WOMEN AND SWARAJ

I gladly publish Suhasini Devi's letter[3] which the reader will find in another column. Whilst the versatile President[4] of the Congress is well able to defend himself, I am inclined to think that my fair correspondent has over-generalized from her own very brief experience. No statistics are needed to demonstrate the vast strides that the movement for the removal of untouchability has made. The barrier is breaking down everywhere. The higher classes are to be met with in every province ministering to the wants of the suppressed classes in the shape of conducting schools and boarding-houses for their children. It was this phenomenon that the President evidently had in mind when he made the reference in his address. There is however infinitely more yet to be done than has been already accomplished.

The question of breaking down the feminine prejudice is most difficult. It is in reality a question of female education. And in this it is a question not merely of education of girls but it is one of the education of married women. I have therefore repeatedly suggested that every patriotic husband should become the wife's own teacher and prepare her for work among her less fortunate

[1] Eevidently written soon after Manilal's marriage

[2] As in the source

[3] In this she had complained that concrete action regarding removal of untouchability was not being taken to the extent it was demanded in the Congress resolutions.

[4] S. Srinivasa Iyengar

sisters. I have also drawn attention to the implications of the suggestion. One of them is for husbands to cease to treat their wives as objects of their enjoyment but to regard them as co-partners in their work of nation-building. We cannot have Rama without Sita. And Sita got her real schooling under the gentle care of her partner during those terrible years of exile and probation. Well, we are all exiles in our own land and need to imitate Rama and Sita to the best of our abilities and opportunity. And in this connection, I cannot help drawing Suhasini Devi's attention to the fact that Sjt. Iyengar has not only broken down the barrier of untouchability for himself but has carried his wife and family too with him in the reform which perhaps he himself would have thought impossible only ten years ago.

The question of inter-dining must be kept distinct from that of untouchability. Exclusion in culinary matters permeates the whole of Hindu society. To confuse it with untouchability is to retard the progress of the latter movement which is aimed at removing the ban on the social service to which the so-called untouchable has as much right as any other human being and on the same terms as the others receive it.

There is, too, confusion regarding swaraj. The term swaraj has many meanings. When Sjt. Iyengar says that removal of untouchability has nothing to do with swaraj, I presume he means that its existence can be no hindrance to constitutional advance. It can surely have nothing to do with diarchy or greater and effective powers being given to the legislatures. Removal of untouchability is a social question to be handled by Hindus. Why should it prevent the Mussalman and the Parsi in common with the Hindu from having the power to regulate the military expenditure, to determine the ratio or to achieve total prohibition or to impose a prohibitive tariff on foreign cloth and protecting the indigenous industries? Real organic swaraj is a different question. That freedom which is associated with the term swaraj in the popular mind is no doubt unattainable without not only the removal of untouchability and the promotion of heart unity between the different sections but also without removing many other social evils that can be easily named. That inward growth which must never stop we have come to understand by the comprehensive term swaraj. And that swaraj cannot be had so long as walls of prejudice, passion and superstition continue to stifle the growth of that stately oak.

Young India, 10-3-1927

148. PRAVARTAK YOUNG BENGAL SANGH AND KHADI

There is no province at the present moment so sorely affected as Bengal. Some of its best young men are rotting in jails without knowing why. Even in the Congress camp there is division. After Deshbandhu the Provincial Congress Committee has not been able to reconcile itself to a single leadership. It is no wonder. There could be only one Deshbandhu.

But in spite of all this, constructive work is going on in Bengal almost without a stop. The number of selfless young men who are engaged in that work is daily growing. The Pravartak Sangh of Bengal whose headquarters are in Chandranagar and which is guided by Sjt. Motilal Roy has been steadily increasing its activity in the production and sale of khadi. But hitherto khadi in the Sangh has been a subsidiary activity—a little one among big ones. But Moti Babu is now determined to make it the centre of his system. I had a long talk about it myself with him when he said that the conviction was being forced upon him that it was not possible to render true service to the masses except through the spinning-wheel as the centre piece. Messrs Banker and Lakshmidas visited Chandranagar after me and they gave me a glowing account of the enthusiasm of the Sangh, about the wheel and its work at Kutubdia. They told me too how eager Moti Babu was to learn the latest improvements in carding and spinning. The Sangh is a comparatively old institution. Its original inspiration is derived from the recluse of Pondichery and has a number of selfless devoted workers in Bengal.

From their khadi figures before me for January, I find that at their production centre they manufactured over Rs. 700 worth of khadi and their sales amounted to over Rs. 3,400 during that month. If the Sangh could concentrate its energies on khadi production, it could soon rival Khadi Pratishthan and Abhoy Ashram without in any way interfering with either. For the field for both production and sale is unlimited provided that each new organization explores and takes up a new field. It is impossible for any single organization to cope with a mighty province like Bengal.

Young India, 10-3-1927

149. WANTED WORKERS

One hears loose talk about village organization, about work in the villages. Paper schemes also for village organization are now and again presented to the country and sometimes elegantly printed and often indifferently written. When questioned the authors tell us frankly that they have not tried their schemes, they have not got the resources, or the time or the inclination; but they think that any idea that occurs to them they are in duty bound to put before the country, however ill-digested or impracticable it might be. Some of the authors get angry when they find that their schemes do not even get a start. But there is one scheme which has been now before the country for some years and which its authors have tried to work first individually, then collectively and which is now being worked through an ever-growing organization called the All-India Spinners' Association. The spinning programme which has been demonstrated to be comparatively a success can be indefinitely extended if workers of the right type can be had.

During the Maharashtra tour, I have been taken to villages where there is almost continuous famine and where people are supposed to be without enough work and without enough to eat. Some of the villages are deserted for six or eight months during the year. The villagers go to Bombay, work under unhealthy and often immoral conditions, then return to their villages during the rainy season bringing with them corruption, drunkenness and disease. If the right type of workers go to these villages with the message of the wheel and with a patience that will not be exhausted and a faith that will not be moved, not one of the villagers need leave their homes. For it is not merely the wages earned by the spinners that are to be counted but it is the whole reconstruction that follows in the wake of the spinning-wheel. The village weaver, the village dyer, the village washerman, the village blacksmith, the village carpenter, all and many others will then find themselves reinstated in their ancient dignity, as is already happening wherever the spinning-wheel has gained a footing.

Who then can become a village worker? For the work that is required of him each worker should have a thorough knowledge both theoretical and practical of the science of spinning; he should therefore know the different varieties of cotton; he should

know the method of picking cotton suitable for hand-spinning. For mill-spinning cotton is picked anyhow. For hand-spinning if cotton is properly picked it will save an immense amount of labour and the yarn also will be stronger. He should know how to gin and should know the varieties of hand-gins used in Indian villages. He should know carding and he should know the different carding-bows in use. He should be able to tell the different staples of cotton and should be able to spin a given number of counts. He should be able to test the strength and evenness and counts of yarn. He should know a good charkha from a bad one and should be able to put dilapidated charkhas under repair. He should be able to straighten an incorrect spindle. If the worker is to live a model life in his village, he must know also the laws of civic sanitation and provide an object-lesson in sanitation to the villagers. He should know the domestic treatment of diseases of daily occurrence. He should know simple accountancy. Above all he must lead a pure and chaste life, if he is to make his mark amongst the villagers and gain their confidence. Naturally a village worker must find happiness in a simple and frugal life. Let no one think that I have sketched what is an impossible requirement. I have not. The technique though it reads formidable is by no means so for a patient student. Purity of character must be a foregone conclusion in any of this work. And no village worker can help falling a prey to some disease or other if he does not know and observe in his own person the laws of sanitation and does not know domestic treatment of simple diseases. The spinning organization is capable of accommodating any number of workers who can satisfy the simple test laid down above.

Young India, 10-3-1927

150. *THE SOUTH AFRICAN SETTLEMENT*

I publish this[1] not so much for its intrinsic merit as for a sample of how a thinking settler in South Africa views the Settlement.

Young India, 10-3-1927

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had expressed satisfaction over the settlement, but pointed out that owing to the "bitter experience of the way such agreements have fared in the past one is apt to view it with the gravest suspicion."

151. BURMA AND CEYLON

A correspondent whose studious habits are evidenced by his letter itself writes thus:

> Some of the following may strike you as idle academic questions, but the mention of India and Burma in the letter of your correspondent, who objects to Hindustani being our inter-provincial language, published in *Young India* of 10-2-1927, along with your reply[1] (in which however you do not refer to Burma), gives me the excuse to put you these questions which I have long been thinking of doing:
>
> 1. Do you believe that Burma can properly be a partner with India in the future swaraj, or do you think it better that Burma should have a separate nationality? (As Burmese opinion itself is divided on the question, yours may guide both it and the Indian.)
>
> 2. Have you ever been to Burma in the course of your many past tours of your country? If not, do you intend paying a visit to Burma in the future and when?
>
> 3. Don't you think it fit that Ceylon should be a partner with India in a future Swarajic Federation on account of their closer racial, linguistic and religious ties that exist between India and Burma—provided of course that the Ceylonese are willing to it (and they seem very likely)?
>
> 4. Do you think that Hindustani has any appreciable vogue in Burma, though it has been a Congress province now for some years (since 1908?), or that Hindustani will be acceptable to the Burmese?
>
> 5. Ditto of Ceylon and the Ceylonese.
>
> Well, these questions coming from me who have never been to Burma or Ceylon myself and can boast of no personal connections there may surprise you, but my interest in them is that of a cosmopolitan, which I take you also to be. I therefore hope you will answer them at your early convenience, especially as I know that many Burmese and Ceylonese as well as Indians are greatly interested in them, and are curious to know your views.

I have been to Burma and know that part of the world sufficiently to enable me to answer with confidence the question put by the correspondent. I cannot say the same thing of Ceylon, which in spite of my desire, I have not yet been able to visit. I have no doubt in my mind that Burma cannot form part of India under swaraj. British India is an artificial description reminding

[1] *Vide* "National Language", 10-2-1927.

us of foreign, that is, British domination and therefore its boundary is contracted or expanded at the will of those who hold us in bondage. Free India will be an organic whole and will include those only who desire to remain as its free citizens. Therefore free India will have its geographical, ethnic and cultural limits. A free India will therefore recognize the differences in race and culture of the Burmese, and while it will extend the hand of fellowship and help to the Burmese nation, it will recognize its right to complete independence and help it to regain and retain it in so far as it lies in India's power. Needless to say that therefore in my scheme there is no demand upon the Burmese to learn Hindi or Hindustani. I expect those who are within the real Indian border to learn Hindustani because they are the children of a common land and heirs to a common culture and are bound together by various other considerations and their provincial dialects contain so many common words.

About Ceylon I cannot speak with equal confidence. Although we have a common culture with Ceylon and although it is predominantly inhabited by Indians from the South, it is a separate entity. And as I have no imperial aspirations for India of my imagination, I should be content to regard Ceylon as an absolutely independent State; but I should not hesitate to accept Ceylon as part of free India if the Islanders express their wish to be so in an unmistakable language.

Young India, 10-3-1927

152. LETTER TO MAMA D. SARAIYA

Saturday, Fagan Sud 9 [March 12, 1927][1]

CHI. MAMA[2],

I was sorry to learn you were rather unwell. But you should no more expect *pujya* Gangabehn to look after you. She is spiritually inclined and it is your duty to help her in her quest. I wish you would appreciate this and cheerfully let her go.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2818. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

[1] The addressee died in 1927.
[2] Daughter of Gangabehn Vaidya

153. A MESSAGE

SABARMATI,
March 13, 1927

God is Truth. The way to Truth lies through *Ahimsa* (non-violence).

M. K. GANDHI

The Immortal Mahatma

154. READ, REFLECT AND WEEP

I have intentionally given this heading to the article below:[1]

It is anonymous, but a priest of Dheds is not a common sight. This proud priest of the Dheds, therefore, has, under the pretext of concealing his name, told us in effect that there may be many workers for the Dheds but only Thakkar Bapa can be regarded as their priest. The article is long, but the reader should not get tired. If he has the slightest sympathy for the cause, he would not be able to leave it in the middle, once he has started reading it. Love of the poor flows in every line of it. If we let but a few drops of it moisten our hearts, our sufferings would end and so would those of the depressed classes.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 13-3-1927

[1] Not reproduced here. Written under a pseudonym, "Priest of Dheds", the article discussed the problems of untouchables in the villages of Gujarat.

155. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*March 14, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters. This is my last of the few days at the Ashram. We shall soon meet and hence no occasion to give you a long love letter. You must regain your lost health. In spite of all your bitter experiences and little progress in Hindi I am certainly not sorry for your having gone there.

It is impossible for me to be there[2] earlier than 19th for I finish a Submerged Classes Conference only on 17th. I would gladly have given up a day at the Ashram if I could have altered the dates of the Conference. But that was not to be thought of. I have now suggested that Ba or Mahadev should open the exhibition in Hardwar unless they will have someone else.

I do hope the wheel has arrived from Calcutta.

Did I tell you I had gained five more lbs. in weight? On the day I reached here, I was nearly 108 lbs. This is very good. I shall be weighed again this evening.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5209. Courtesy: Mirabehn

156. LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Unrevised *March 14, 1927*

DEAR KSHITISH BABU,

I am so glad—I have sent you a wire today heartily approving your decision. But you must keep your health and make Sodepur a health resort, by proper drainage and what not. Do please continue to write to me. Have you sent a travelling charkha to Mirabai, Gurukul Kangri, Bijnor District? I wrote to you long ago about it. If you have not, please send it by V.P.P. immediately.

Here are my dates:

[1] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira*

[2] Gurukul Kangri

19-21	Gurukul Kangri, Dist. Bijnor	27-4th	April Karnatak, headquarters Belgaum
23	Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay	5-12	Madras
25-26	Kolhapur	12-27	Mysore State

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8031

157. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[On or after *March 14, 1927*][1]

DEAR SATIS BABU,

What a joy Kshitish Babu's decision! I have telegraphed my approval and warned him against being ill in Sodepur.

I am glad Tarini is getting better.

How about Hemaprabha Devi and the boy? I shall feel relieved when you can really tell me that you are all yourselves again.

I shall inquire about the commission.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

[PS.]

19-21	Gurukul Kangri, Dist. Bijnor	25-26	Kolhapur
23	Bombay	27-4th	April[2] Belgaum
		5-12	Madras

From a photostat: G.N. 1632

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] The source has "March".

158. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 15, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters. There might be one more tomorrow. I see even Sethi has been failing you.

The purpose of writing this letter is to ask you to send Mrs. Row the letters she wants. Here is her letter. You know her. She was at the Ashram for a day. She is the wife of the celebrated Dr. Row and the daughter of a celebrated Sanskrit scholar. She is herself too a good Sanskrit scholar. The rest you can gather from her letter. Please write to her directly. You may wait if you like till we meet.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5210. Courtesy: Mirabehn

159. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

March 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

It would delight my heart to be your guest during my stay in Madras. I am in Rajagopalachari's hands. Please arrange what you like with him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2235

160. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Tuesday [March 15, 1927][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I write this from a jungle. I must have three hours. I have already had three hours' silence. Go through the enclosed letter and do send him the essay on spinning in exchange for the spindle. The spindle has arrived there; Krishnadas knows about it. Send him a report about it. If it is a good spindle we should have it [made] at a reasonable cost. You should not keep the spindle if it is not perfect. But you should point out its defects and help him. The man seems to be all right. Please let me know if in the first instance, I should not refer such letters to you. I shudder to think of the load of your work. I am therefore anxious to spare you as much work as possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7760. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

161. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

MADHI,
[March 15, 1927][2]

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. I get news about your health regularly. Now you have been released. That's good. If you cannot recoup enough strength you had better drop your trip to Bharatpur.

Ghanshyamdasji's letter shows his candour. It is enclosed herewith.

How is Janakibehn now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6142. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] From the addressee's endorsement: "Date of receipt, 16-3-1927"

[2] Gandhiji was in Madhi, Mandvi taluk, Surat district, on this date; *vide* the succeeding item.

162. SPEECH AT MADHI, MANDVI TALUK

March 15, 1927

Many thoughts occur to me on entering this taluk. I forget my misery by poking fun at you, but it is a sign of my pain that I resort to that. There was a day when not only Gujarat but the whole of India respected Surat district, and its contribution to the swaraj effort was considered to be the best, from the point of view of monetary help, silent work as soldiers' and work in the field of education and for the service of *Antyajas*. There was a friendly competition between two districts. Even now I have memories of that friendly strife in which Bardoli had excelled itself. What a contrast between that day when Bardoli had become famous in the world, and today? If we go to Bardoli today, we would see only a few white caps and a few *Antyajas*. We would be reminded of the tragic events in Sarbhan and wonder if we would ever get swaraj. And how can I ever forget the pledge we had taken, the oath the forty-eight men had taken with God as their witness and, relying on their word, the ultimatum I had sent to the Viceroy? And now I have to come here to inaugurate this Ashram. The lesson we should draw from this is that we should not lose heart, should not lose faith till death and should not retreat—that is the significance of the starting of this Ashram. It is not a matter of pride that we have started it with money from the Gujarat Provincial Committee. If you wish that an Ashram should be established here, then you should not be reluctant to give the necessary money. You should raise the money and then ask me for men. It is a wrong procedure to get money from the Provincial Committee for work here. Anyone who depends only on the blood in his brain for his work is bound to fail. One should rely on the blood in every part of one's body. Instead of functioning as our brain, the Provincial Committee has become our feet, and we let ourselves be dragged behind it. This is an unhappy state of affairs.

When I see national schools and depressed communities in any place, I am reminded of Gujarat. I wonder, then, if Gujarat is not out of the competition. But I am an optimist, and see rays of hope even in the face of countless disappointments. One such ray, of course, is this modest Ashram, for there are still earnest workers to run it. May it prosper, and may Bardoli, broken in spirit, and

Surat in ruins, shine again and shed lustre on Gujarat and the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-3-1927

163. *LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI*

[Before *March 16, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Kaka Saheb had suggested that the Managing Committee should see all relevant letters so as to know my views on various matters. This is right and so henceforth I shall write separately on business matters so that everyone can go through the correspondence. Again I find you as uncharitable as before. I agree it is unavoidable since you are not aware of it. Shake off this attitude. You will be able to do so if you try. You must participate in the work of the School Committee. If you wish to be nominated to the Education Committee, it can be done. Do not stand on prestige. More when I get your letter. Try to pacify Ramachandra. You should have a better appreciation of the difficulties of the lift.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7761. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

164. *SPEECH AT RANIPARAJ CONFERENCE, VEDCHHI*[2]

March 16, 1927

Gandhiji asked:

Those who pledged themselves to wear khaddar, raise their hands—all. Those who pledged themselves to abjure drink—all. Those who have kept their vows—all. Those who have broken their vow—none.

The earlier part [of his speech] was by way of appeal to the money-lender and the liquor-seller, the Bania and the Parsi, to reform their ways, as the latter part was one of congratulation to the Hillmen and urging them

[1] From the date of receipt endorsed by the addressee

[2] This was published under the title "In a Gold Mine".

to carry on self-purification more extensively. There was a quaint appeal about the way in which he commended to them the new appellation of "Hillmen".

Why should you be called "black" people? We are all black, the God who coloured our skin being the same, and his brush being the same. You will be called Hillmen from today. Be you brave as the lions and tigers in the hills, so that none may cheat you, or oppress you, or violate your purity. The denizen of the forest is either a wise man, a *rishi* or a dacoit or a beast of prey. You are neither of the last two, so you have to become *rishis*. And there is no lack of opportunity for you. None of the wicked temptations of the towns lie in your way. You are fitted by nature to live on fruit and root and to eat in order to live, not to live in order to eat, and therefore best fitted to teach us that healthy way of living. Learn our sacred lore and with your innate purity of heart tame the lion and the tiger, as did the *rishis* of old. To the women I would say just a word. I am glad you have taken to khaddar, I now want you to give up your ugly ornaments which disfigure your limbs, are receptacles of dirt, and badges of slavery.

Young India, 24-3-1927

165. MR. SPEAKER'S DONATION

It was not without regret that I had to withhold the pleasure from the readers of sharing the news contained in the following correspondence between Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel and myself. . . .

IV[1]

20, AKBAR ROAD, NEW DELHI,
March 9, 1927

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I have decided, as you are already aware, to remit to you as before such amount as I think I can reasonably save every month from my salary for the purpose mentioned in my letter to you on the subject in the month of April[2] last. I propose to continue this arrangement as far as possible during the whole period of my office as President of the Assembly.

[1] I, II and III are not reproduced here. For III, *vide* Vol. XXXI, pp. 194-5.

[2] In fact, May; letter No. I in the correspondence; *vide* Vol. XXX, Appendix I.

I enclose herewith a cheque for Rs. 2,000 representing such savings till the end of February.

Yours sincerely
V. J. PATEL

The news was withheld at the express wish of Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel. He felt a delicacy about the announcement whilst the elections were pending. After the elections too I was unable to obtain his consent till last week. I would myself have encouraged the hesitancy, if public good had not demanded publicity. I know that Vithalbhai desires his example to be copied. If for some reason or other salaries out of all proportion to Indian environment must be drawn, an adequate proportion of them may be set aside for some public good. I am aware that there are several highly salaried men who devote their income not for personal enjoyment but for public good. But they direct their use in any manner they choose. Vithalbhai desires to constitute of such donations a special fund and leave its administration in the hands of men of known standing. If the object is to be attained, the board of trustees should, whilst it ought to be completely national, be representative of as many parties as it is possible to bring at a common board. I therefore invite criticism and suggestions from those who approve of the plan. I have no desire to take sole charge of the funds or to use them only for the purposes to which my life is devoted. I know that I shall be best fulfilling the purpose of Vithalbhai's great gift by seeking the co-operation of as many as would help.

Young India, 17-3-1927

166. NO AND YES

"Comrade" Saklatwala is dreadfully in earnest. His sincerity is transparent. His sacrifices are great. His passion for the poor is unquestioned. I have therefore given his fervent open appeal[1] to me that close attention which that of a sincere patriot and humanitarian must command. But in spite of all my desire to say 'Yes' to his appeal, I must say 'No' if I am to return sincerity for sincerity or if I am to act according to my faith. But I can say 'Yes' to his appeal after my own fashion. For underneath his

[1] Saklatwala's "Open Letter to Mahatma Gandhi" was released in Bombay on March 8 and was published in *The Hindustan Times*, 17-3-1927. For excerpts from it, *vide* Appendix I.

intense desire that I should co-operate with him on his terms, there is the emphatic implied condition that I must say 'Yes' only if his argument satisfies my head and heart. A 'No' uttered from deepest conviction is better and greater than a 'Yes' merely uttered to please, or what is worse, to avoide trouble.

In spite of all the desire to offer hearty co-operation, I find myself against a blind wall. His facts are fiction and his deductions based upon fiction are necessarily baseless. And where these facts are true, my whole energy is concentrated upon nullifying their (to me) poisonous results. I am sorry, but we do stand at opposite poles. There is however one great thing in common between us. Both claim to have the good of the country and humanity as our only goal. Though therefore we may for the moment seem to be going in opposite directions, I expect we shall meet some day. I promise to make ample amends when I discover my error. Meanwhile however, my error, since I do not recognize it as such, must be my shield and my solace.

For unlike "Comrade" Saklatwala, I do not believe that multiplication of wants and machinery contrived to supply them is taking the world a single step nearer its goal. "Comrade" Saklatwala swears by the modern rush. I whole-heartedly detest this mad desire to destroy distance and time, to increase animal appetites and go to the ends of the earth in search of their satisfaction. If modern civilization stands for all this, and I have understood it to do so, I call it satanic and with it the present system of Government, its best exponent. I distrust its schemes of amelioration of the lot of the poor, I distrust its currency reform, I distrust its army and navy. In the name of civilization and its own safety this Government has continuously bled the masses, it has enslaved the people, it has bribed the powerful with distinctions and riches and it has sought to crush under the weight of its despotic regulations the liberty-loving patriots who would not be won over either by flattery or riches. I would destroy that system today, if I had the power. I would use the most deadly weapons, if I believed that they would destroy it. I refrain only because the use of such weapons would only perpetuate the system though it may destroy its present administrators. Those who seek to destroy men rather than their manners adopt the latter and become worse than those whom they destroy under the mistaken belief that the manners will die with the men. They do not know the root of the evil.

The movement of 1920 was designed to show that we could not reform the soulless system by violent means, thus becoming

soulless ourselves, but we could do so only by not becoming victims of the system, i.e., by non-co-operation, by saying an emphatic 'No' to every advance made to entrap us into the nets spread by satan.

That movement suffered a check but is not dead. My promise was conditional. The conditions were simple and easy. But they proved too difficult for those who took a leading part in the movement.

What "Comrade" Saklatwala believes to be my error and failure I regard to be the expression of my strength and deep conviction. It may be an error but so long as my conviction that it is truth abides, my very error must, as it does, sustain me. My retracing my steps at Bardoli I hold to be an act of wisdom and supreme service to the country. The Government is the weaker for that decision. It would have regained all lost position if I had persisted after Chauri Chaura in carrying out the terms of what was regarded as an ultimatum[1] to the Viceroy.

My "Comrade" is wrong in saying that the South African movement was a failure. If it was, my whole life must be written down as a failure. And his invitation to me to enlist under his colours must be held to be meaningless. South Africa gave the start to my life's mission. Nor do I consider it to be wrong to have offered, during the late War, the services of my companions and myself, under my then convictions, as ambulance men.

This great M.P. is in a hurry. He disdains to study facts. Let me inform him that the khadi movement is not on the wane. It did last year at least twenty times as much work as during 1920. It is now serving not less than 50,000 spinners in 1,500 villages besides weavers, washermen, printers, dyers and tailors.

Mr. Saklatwala asks what khaddar stands for. Well, it stands for simplicity not shoddiness. It sits well on the shoulders of the poor and it can be made, as it was made in the days of yore, to adorn the bodies of the richest and the most artistic men and women. It is reviving ancient art and crafts. It does not seek to destroy all machinery but it does regulate its use and check its weedy growth. It uses machinery for the service of the poorest in their own cottages. The wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery.

Khaddar delivers the poor from the bonds of the rich and creates a moral and spiritual bond between the classes and the masses. It restores to the poor somewhat of what the rich have taken from them.

Khaddar does not displace a single cottage industry. On the contrary, it is being daily recognized that it is becoming the centre

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXII, pp. 302-5.

of other village industries. Khaddar brings a ray of hope to the widow's broken-up home.

But it does not prevent her from earning more if she can. It prevents no one from seeking a better occupation. Khaddar offers honourable employment to those in need of some. It utilizes the idle hours of the nation. The esteemed comrade quotes with pride the work of those who offer more lucrative employment. Let him know that khaddar does that automatically. It cannot put annas into the pockets of the poor without putting rupees into the pockets of some. Whereas those who begin their work in the cities, though they are no doubt doing good work, touch but the fringe of the question. Khaddar touches the very centre and therefore necessarily includes the rest.

But the whole of the impatient communist's letter concentrates itself upon the cities and thus ignores India and Indian conditions which are to be found only in her 7,00,000 villages. The half a dozen modern cities are an excrescence and serve at the present moment the evil purpose of draining the life-blood of the villages. Khaddar is an attempt to revise and reverse the process and establish a better relationship between the cities and the villages. The cities with their insolent torts [*sic*] are a constant menace to the life and liberty of the villagers.

Khaddar has the greatest organizing power in it because it has itself to be organized and because it affects all India. If khaddar rained from heaven it would be a calamity. But as it can only be manufactured by the willing co-operation of starving millions and thousands of middle-class men and women, its success means the best organization conceivable along peaceful lines.

If cooking had to be revived and required the same organization, I should claim for it the same merit that I claim for khaddar.

My communist comrade finds fault with my work among the labourers in Jamshedpur because I accepted an address in Jamshedpur not from the Tatas but from the employees. His disapprobation is due, I expect, to the fact that the late Mr. Ratan Tata was in the chair. Well, I am not ashamed of the honour. Mr. Tata appeared to me to be a humane and considerate employer. He readily granted, I think, all the prayers of the employees and I heard later that the agreement was being honourably kept. I do ask and receive donations for my work from the rich as well as the poor. The former gladly give me their donations. This is no personal triumph. It is the triumph of non-violence which I endeavoured to represent, be it ever so inadequately. It is to me a matter of perennial satisfaction that

I retain generally the affection and the trust of those whose principles and policies I oppose. The South Africans gave me personally their confidence and extended their friendship. In spite of my denunciation of British policy and system I enjoy the affection of thousands of Englishmen and women, and in spite of unqualified condemnation of modern materialistic civilization, the circle of European and American friends is ever widening. It is again a triumph of non-violence.

Lastly about labour in the cities. Let there be no misunderstanding. I am not opposed to organization of labour, but as in everything else, I want its organization along Indian lines, or if you will, my lines. I am doing it. The Indian labourer knows it instinctively. I do not regard capital to be the enemy of labour. I hold their co-ordination to be perfectly possible. The organization of labour that I undertook in South Africa, Champaran or Ahmedabad was in no spirit of hostility to the capitalists. The resistance in each case and to the extent it was thought necessary was wholly successful. My ideal is equal distribution, but so far as I can see, it is not to be realized. I therefore work for equitable distribution. This I seek to attain through khaddar. And since its attainment must sterilize British exploitation at its centre, it is calculated to purify the British connection. Hence in that sense khaddar leads to swaraj.

The Mahatma I must leave to his fate. Though a non-co-operator I shall gladly subscribe to a bill to make it criminal for anybody to call me Mahatma and to touch my feet. Where I can impose the law myself, i.e., at the Ashram, the practice is criminal.

Young India, 17-3-1927

167. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

(ON TOUR,)
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
March 17, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I get your letters regularly. You asked me how to answer the conundrums that your fellow passengers had put before you regarding India's alleged indifference about total prohibition. As, in my travels, I had not your address, I could not write to you, but I wrote a leading article[2] in *Young India* based upon your letter,

[1] Permanent address

[2] *Vide* "Is India Prohibitionist?", 3-3-1927.

which I hope you saw and which contained the answer you wanted. If you need anything more, you will please refer to me.

I am glad you are being assisted by Tarini Sinha.

I am looking forward to your letter giving me a description of your experiences at the India Office. I am quite sure that the steps you are taking to equip yourself for the task are the proper and necessary steps. They alone can give you the knowledge, experience and confidence required for the struggle that is in front of you.

I have read your interview with *The Observer*. It was reproduced in one of the Indian dailies. I certainly agree with you that if you had not given that interview it would have been better. But, if the reporter has correctly reported you what does it matter even if it contains some erroneous deductions. It would be terrible if at every step we hesitate because of the possibility of erroneous judgement.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6565

168. CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT GURUKUL KANGRI[1]

March 19, 1927

The Gurukul was Swamiji's best creation and though he is physically not with us he lives amongst us in his Gurukul. It was his most original contribution to education, inasmuch as when we had lost our heads over Western education he decided that we should think and act and educate ourselves in the Vedic way. Swamiji will live with us so long as his Gurukul lasts and the Gurukul will last so long as there is a single graduate of the Gurukul prepared to serve it with truth and self-sacrifice, and with the courage which was Swamiji's and which is a synonym for forgiveness. Then there is *brahmacharya* on which Swamiji laid the greatest emphasis and without which all your education will come to naught. Avoiding lustful contact with women is not the last word on *brahmacharya*. It is only the beginning and the perfection is reached when the *brahmachari* refuses to be ruffled or

[1] Delivered on the occasion of its silver jubilee. This is from a report by Mahadev Desai.

angry, no matter what provocation is offered him. For anger is the destruction of *virya*, the vital essence.[1]

I appeal to you to carry on the work, by forgetting which you will forget Swamiji and by killing which you will kill Swamiji. Remember Abdul Rashid has not murdered Swamiji, he has made him a martyr. The day you forget the Swami's mission will be his day of death. The Swami was a great lover of untouchables. All who love him are in duty bound to carry on his mission. It will be a great misfortune if the Swami's beloved cause is given up because of lack of funds or workers.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that Malaviyaji had pleaded more strongly for khaddar than he could do, but he too wanted to appeal as khaddar helped the solution of the problem of untouchability. Khaddar and charkha provided food to the teeming millions, mostly the depressed classes. Hence khaddar and the removal of untouchability were interwoven and could not be separated.

If you want to save our ancient civilization and if you feel it a duty to save the villagers from destruction, then take up the message of khaddar from village to village.

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi said:

Truth is the bedrock of happy life. Be true to yourselves and the country.

Young India, 31-3-1927

169. SATYAGRAHA WEEK

April 6 is nearing. I assume that at that time efforts will be made at every place to sell khadi. I draw the attention of the citizens of Ahmedabad to the following note[2] sent by the Khadi Bhandar on Ritchie Road in Ahmedabad announcing reduction of prices during the period:

I hope a good many citizens will buy this khadi. Everyone should remember that this reduction will be in force only from April 6 to April 13.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 20-3-1927

[1] What follows is from *The Leader*, 23-3-1927.
[2] Not reproduced here

170. *SPEECH ON SHRADDHANAND MEMORIAL FUND, GURUKUL KANGRI*[1]

March 19, 1927

We khadi workers make our collections in handkerchiefs, yours you would do in buckets. . . .

If I have criticized the Arya Samaj, I am also anxious to give my tribute of praise for its work. And those who give hearty praise have a right to criticize too. Of all religious and political bodies that have come into being of late years the Arya Samaj has made probably the greatest contribution to bridge the gulf between the classes and the masses that had been widening ever since the advent of the British in India. No institution is perfect, and I could, if I would, point out some of the defects of the Gurukul. But there is no questioning the fact that it has rendered substantial service to the country. Whenever I see a Punjabi youth capable of reading and writing Devanagari, I immediately conclude that he must have had his training in one of the Gurukuls. They have done more than any other institutions in these parts to revivify Sanskrit learning and Aryan culture.

Young India, 31-3-1927

171. *SPEECH AT NATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE, HARDWAR*[2]

March 20, 1927

It is the duty of every Indian student to learn Sanskrit. It certainly is the duty of the Hindus, but it is also the Muslims' because, in the final analysis, their forbears too were Rama and Krishna and they ought to know Sanskrit in order to know them. However, to maintain contacts with the Muslims, it is also the duty of Hindus to learn the former's language. Today we run away from each other's languages because we have become mad. Take it for a certainty that an institution which teaches fear and hatred of others surely is not a national institution.

[1] From a report by Mahadev Desai

[2] Delivered as President of the Conference, held under the auspices of Gurukul Kangri

Gandhiji said that national institutions should produce messengers of Hindu-Muslim unity. Institutions producing fanatical Hindus and Muslims were worth destruction. Educational institutions were not meant to produce bigoted persons. He was sure that there was no reason for disappointment and still the cause could prosper if self-reliant and self-sacrificing teachers were available.[1]

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-3-1927

172. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO CHAND TYAGI

March 21, 1927

I wanted to talk to you at night but you were not there. At 10 I entered upon my silence.

What do you wish to do? If nothing worries you here and you find you are at peace, you should propagate what you believe in and thereby serve the country.

. . . .[2]

You can go to the Ashram whenever you wish. Nowadays I do not stay there. I do not know, therefore, if you would like to go there.

You can also write to me any time you wish.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4276. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

173. LETTER TO MAMA D. SARAIYA

HARDWAR,
Fagan Vad 3, 1983 [March 21, 1927]

CHI. MAMA,

I was glad to read your letter. One should say you have acted nobly if you relieved Gangabehn without rancour and as a matter of dharma, and I am sure you will have peace hereafter because your mind would have regained its equanimity. We ought to be only too glad to have some of our dear ones spiritually inclined and regarding the entire world as their own family.

[1] This paragraph is from *The Leader*, 23-3-1927
[2] As in the source

I hope you are now better. Please write to me again. Cultivate the habit of writing tidy letters and in ink.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2819. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

174. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

Not revised

HARDWAR,
Fagan Vad 3, 1983 [March 21, 1927]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

Your letter about Rs. 2,000 has been referred to me. I have not a cowrie left with me. Whatever had been saved has been spent, so I shall have to go abegging once again.

I have written to them to send you the amount this time, whatever their difficulty. But what about later?

Now you will have to get your budget approved by me. You—i.e., you and Devchandbhai—should have the influence to raise the funds needed to run the Parishad. If this cannot be done, how long can we hold on?

Budgets for all the other centres should also receive prior approval. You should show to Nanabhai the budget for your school in particular. He should inspect the school and I shall try to raise the amount that he approves of. I am always thinking of affiliating all the national schools to the Vidyapith, because it is now becoming difficult to ask for separate funds. Of course we do collect from a great many donors in the name of khadi. I had hoped to accomplish something at the Parishad; but it did not come off. So now we have to think anew since it has been postponed to August. So get your budget first sanctioned by me before you put in your next demand. Ultimately each [institution] will have to stand on its own as in the rest of the country. Or we shall have to draw up some special scheme for education in Maha Gujarat. You should contact Nanabhai and consider all the matters. We may be said to have taken up three tasks, viz., the khadi movement, work among the *Antyajas* and national education in general.

I see all the three combined in khadi; education it certainly covers. I have not yet discovered any final solution for the *Antyaja* problem. I write all this for your co-workers to think

over. You should write to me for clarifications, which might solve some of your problems.

Chi. Chhaganlal will go through this before delivering it to you, so that they will all know where I am at the moment.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

23-24 Bombay
25-26 Kolhapur
27 Belgaum

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2833. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

175. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

HARDWAR,
Silence Day [*March 21, 1927*]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter which I am forwarding to Chi. Kishorelal. He is a man of truth and aspires for *moksha*. You and I ought to reconsider a matter about which he has doubts. You and I should, therefore, endeavour to convince him that the step you propose to take is not contrary to dharma. What Chi. Mama has written can be considered good, provided she has not done it in anger. It is all right if you take the step after mature deliberation. In that case Mama too will be perfectly at peace. If the move disturbs her it would not at all be wrong to suspect some flaw in it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8824. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

176. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Monday [*March 21, 1927*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter.

When I get the money it will help the charkha movement. I am very glad that *pujya* Malaviyaji is being progressively drawn to the charkha. I shall want large amounts for the charkha work. With his help I can raise larger funds.

Bhaiji and Rameshwarji have decided to donate money for the construction of reservoirs of water for the *Antyajas*; it will be spent as directed by them.

I did not know Parasram collected scraps of paper. I have warned him against this fault. He will write to you. He had no wrong motive. He is a simpleton but I can get work out of him. He wishes to live with *pujya* Malaviyaji and Rabindranath for some days. I have asked him to try on his own to get himself admitted to their service.

In my opinion the following rules of conduct must be observed to safeguard one's health while staying in Europe:

1. We should not take food to which we are not used.

2. In Europe they eat six or seven times a day, but we must not eat more than thrice. Do not get addicted to taking chocolate or other such things between meals.

3. They eat even at 1 o'clock at night. But we must eat nothing after 8 in the evening. When visiting people and places we are, it is believed, expected to take tea, etc. This is not true.

4. One should go walking at least six miles daily. One should walk both in the morning and in the evening.

5. It is not right to wear too many clothes, secret being that one must not feel cold. Walking shakes off cold.

6. It is not at all necessary to put on European dress.

7. One should try to get acquainted with the poor people of Europe; walking helps such acquaintance. When there is time at your disposal, it is better to walk.

8. Do not persuade yourself for a moment that since you have gone to Europe you have got to do something. Attempt only what clean and spontaneous efforts can accomplish.

[1] From the tour programme

9. Your stay in Europe will, I feel, result in at least one good thing. You can certainly build up your body.

10. May God save you from mental debauchery; very few Indians escape it. While their way of living is natural to them, it only helps to intoxicate us.

11. The practice of reading the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* must in no case be given up. If you have not been doing it already, the sooner you begin the better.

I am sure you did not expect advice in such minute detail. This I am giving because I have great faith in the goodness of yourself and your brothers. Few rich people possess your goodness and humility. I seek an intense growth in these qualities and I want to put them to use in the service of the nation. I have no faith in the principle of *shatham prati shathyam*[1]. Therefore, wherever I see purity, truth and non-violence, etc., even in the smallest degree, I start collecting the treasure with the care of a miser, and it makes me happy.

You can ask for any further advice.

23-24 Bombay — 27- April 4 Belgaum
25-26 Kolhapur — 5-12 Madras

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Please acknowledge receipt.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6146. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

177. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*March 21, 1927*][2]

[QUESTION:] 1. Do you feel it unbearable to live under the present political thraldom or not?

[ANSWER:] I do.

2. If so, are you yourself individually prepared to get rid of it and gain political freedom or not?

I am.

[1] 'Roguery towards a rogue'
[2] *Vide* the succeeding item.

3. Is there any objection to suppose that "your being prepared" means that you have acquired two spiritual qualities, viz., soul-force and love of freedom?

You may suppose so.

4. Does not "preparation for the attainment of freedom" mean making the Indians endowed with the qualities and power necessary for such attainment which you respectively have acquired?

It does mean.

5. Is not intellectual and moral education necessary for acquiring such qualities?

It is.

6. If so, what are the ways of educating the whole nation and how much time will it take to do it?

Through spinning.

7. Is not the creation of a feeling of thorough disgust for political subjection extremely necessary?

It is.

8. If so, what may be in your opinion the percentage of people having such a feeling among the three hundred millions of Indians?

Difficult to estimate.

9. To create the consciousness of bondage is it not necessary to have the knowledge of the past glory of the motherland and to feel real restlessness on account of the present painful condition?

It is.

10. Is it possible to create soul-force in the absence of the said knowledge or the said restlessness?

Hardly.

11. Do acquisition of soul-force and the possession of the power to suffer any pains boldly and calmly constitute the chief pillars of your spiritual activities or not?

To an extent, yes.

12. Where, under what circumstances and how are the people to make use of their soul-force for wresting power from the rulers?

Throughout the country by non-violent non-co-operation.

13. What kind of intellectual, moral and physical preparation is necessary on the part of the people for the accomplishment of these two objects, viz., civil disobedience and refusal to pay Government taxes?

Hand-spinning gives them an idea of non-violence and self-confidence.

14. If our preparedness be looked upon as being complete, i.e., 16 annas, what proportion of the preparedness in terms of annas is necessary, in your opinion, on the part of your followers or the general public to bring about the attainment of freedom?

Eight annas one pie.

15. Is the public so prepared today? If not how much time do you think, it will take to be so prepared?

Not yet; unable to prophesy.

16. What percentage of people in the country knows the fact that there is a unique personality like Mahatma Gandhi in India?

I have no idea.

17. If it is taken for granted that one among a thousand may know it, how many persons per hundred thousand may have, in your opinion, the knowledge of Mahatmaji's ideas of freedom and his activities?

$\frac{1}{1000}$th of those that know.

18. It seems that there is complete darkness with respect to such knowledge; if the darkness is to be dispelled, how long will it have to be done?

As long as is necessary.

19. Do you say that it is impossible to attain swaraj even if, in the absence of unity between the Hindus and Muslims, people of both communities should feel the miseries of political bondage to be unbearable and should struggle to be free from it, and even if a feeling should arise in both the communities that life without freedom is worse than death?

I do not, if both feel as you suggest.

20. Do you say that a painful consciousness of the unbearable political condition has not the power to bring into being the union of the communities belonging to two different cultures?

It has the power.

21. The religious persecution of the Hindus by the Mohammedans was the principal cause which contributed to the attainment of freedom in the days of Shivaji and people belonging to different castes became united to free themselves from religious persecutions. Readers of history do know the fact that the establishment of *maths* by Ramdas proved very useful in this respect. Is it not the fact that the freedom which the people want today is for freeing themselves from the political, industrial and commercial oppression?

Yes; indeed.

22. Whether untouchability goes away or not, whether the Hindu-Mohammedan disunion disappears or not, if, in spite of the existence of these two things, we could have two thousand persons maddened with the desire for freedom and endowed with soul-force, will you say that these men will not be able to gain the freedom of the country?

These two thousands will sweep away disunion and untouchability and bring swaraj.

23. If 1,400 civilians can hold such a vast country like India under subjugation will you say that the said two thousand persons endowed with the said qualities will not be able to take back India?

Vide answer 22.

24. In short, do you say that it is not possible to attain swaraj even if the one emotion of feeling a strong disgust for bondage and regarding life without liberty to be unbearable, pervades the whole of India?

Mere emotion will never bring swaraj.

25. If it is seen that the said emotion is quite indispensable and that it would lead to the attainment of swaraj, can it be created by your present lectures on khaddar?

My lectures on khaddar are converting that emotion into energy.

The Hindustan Times, 30-4-1927

178. LETTER TO G. K. TILAK[1]

IN MOVING TRAIN,
March 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter has been following me all this time. As you had taken considerable pains over your questions, but as I must not take them in *Young India*, I send you replies[2] herewith. You may publish them if you like.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 30-4-1927

[1] A pleader of Barsi
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

179. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day [March 22, 1927][1]

SISTERS,

Parting this time was particularly painful as I was anxious to talk to you about things and to have your views on many more. But who after all is free? We are in God's hands and we dance as He makes us to. If we acted according to our own desires we would come to grief. And so I do not worry although my wish was not fulfilled. We shall meet again when He wills. Till then we shall communicate by means of letters.

This is what I would like you to do just now:

1. Acquire a methodical and sound knowledge of ginning, carding and spinning—so good that you may be able to teach others.

2. Look after the common kitchen and make it an ideal place. For the present I do not want any one of you to give all your time to that work, but since this duty is yours by birth and training, I entrust to you the responsibility of seeing that the cooking is well done and that the kitchen is clean.

These two tasks are just the right ones for you. Are they not?

Mirabai will leave today for Rewari Ashram,[2] where Jamnalalji's daughter is staying.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3642

[1] From the reference to Mirabehn who left for Rewari Ashram on March 21; *vide* the succeeding item.

[2] For further Hindustani studies

180. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN, AFTER BHARATPUR,
March 22, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

The parting today was sad, because I saw that I pained you. And yet it was inevitable. I want you to be a perfect woman. I want you to shed all angularities. All unnecessary reserve must go. Ashram is the centre of your home, but wherever you happen to be must be your home. Without being a burden on people with whom we come in contact, we must get the things we need from them. We must feel one with all. And I have discovered that we never give without receiving consciously or unconsciously. There is a reserve which I want us all to have. But that reserve must be a fruit of self-denial, not sensitiveness. Yours is due to sensitiveness. This must go. I thought I would draw your attention. But I saw that I should have waited. However, the thing is done.

Do throw off the nervousness. You must not cling to me as in this body. The spirit without the body is ever with you. And that is more than the feeble embodied imprisoned spirit with all the limitations that flesh is heir to. The spirit without the flesh is perfect, and that is all we need. This can be felt only when we practise detachment. This you must now try to achieve.

This is how I would grow if I were you. But you should grow along your own lines. You will therefore reject all I have said in this that does not appeal to your heart or head. You must retain your individuality at all cost. Resist me when you must. For I may judge you wrongly in spite of all my love for you. I do not want you to impute infallibility to me.

23-24 Bombay, Laburnum Road
24-26 Kolhapur
27 onwards Belgaum

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

You left money, etc. It has been sent to you.

From the original: C.W. 5211. Courtesy: Mirabehn.

181. SPEECH AT SANTA CRUZ, BOMBAY[1]

March 23, 1927

Replying, Gandhiji began to address the gathering in Gujarati when he was requested to speak in Hindi as there was a large section of Madrasis and others, who could not understand Gujarati. Gandhiji, however, took votes and according to the majority began to speak in Gujarati but assured the minority that their claim would not be neglected. He said:

The fear entertained by Mr. J. K. Mehta is well-founded and I am really going to hit as hard as a man with non-violence as his creed can do for the wide difference between the amount given at Santa Cruz six years ago and the one[2] given today. It was only on account of the pressing invitation of Mr. Mehta that I agreed to come here instead of going to Rewari as was originally fixed. You perhaps know that though I am not neglecting the cities I have been going to the villages very often these days because India resides not in her handful of towns but in villages. Even there it is not difficult to collect Rs. 3,000. You will perhaps be surprised to learn that the villages in Maharashtra and Bihar contributed a lakh and a quarter each during my last tour there. And khaddar too is spreading fast and wide in villages. I shall quote figures which will prove, in spite of all the odd rumours that khaddar is extinct, that khaddar is produced 20 times more than it was being manufactured in 1920, i.e., in the beginning of the movement. In 1926, khaddar worth at least Rs. 20 lakhs was manufactured and at least 50,000 women scattered in 1,500 different villages of the country were given work of spinning for which they were paid over Rs. 9 lakhs. But this position is not at all satisfactory. It does not satisfy me. I have found that khaddar is rarely seen in Bombay and other cities. In Bombay in 1921, the case was quite different. I can account for the present slackness on two grounds that either those who were wearing khaddar before have changed their opinion or that they were playing a false part in 1921.

Although this is not the occasion on which I can speak either on non-co-operation or Hindu-Muslim unity, I should state

[1] In reply to a welcome address by Jaisukhlal K. Mehta, Chairman, Bombay Suburban District Congress Committee

[2] Rs. 3,000; against 52,000, six years earlier

clearly that my faith in those things is as great and as firm as it ever was. I should say it is greater. If I want swaraj and swaraj of the type I have been struggling for all along the last few years, I cannot help feeling that Hindu-Muslim unity is absolutely necessary. But as one who can know human nature, I have found that the whole atmosphere is changed. But it is not so with khaddar. The result of the khaddar work is not disappointing. I have found that people are not tired of it. And for this we need not rely on newspapers which as a matter of fact are read only in cities. I have found no newspapers in Hardwar and yet Rs. 2 lakhs were easily collected there. That place is not like Bombay which seems to me to be an offshoot of England.

The money that I have been collecting at present goes to the All-India Deshbandhu Das Memorial Fund which is to be spent in village organization. The fitting memorial to the late Deshbandhu would be a thorough organization of villages and I dare say that charkha is the only way to organize the villages of India. I can give you an example of the Raniparaj community of the Surat District where through the message of the charkha the community in about 104 villages has been thoroughly organized.[1] The illiterate women of that community have given up wearing heavy ornaments and all of them—men, women and children wore pure khaddar. It is for work among such classes and villages that money is wanted. I am the self-appointed barrister of the millions of poor people—*Daridranarayanas*—of India and in their name I appeal to you the richer classes to contribute the greatest amount for the great movement of khaddar.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-3-1927

182. *FROM HIS TREASURE CHEST*

I cull the following from gems the friend whom I have already introduced to the reader sends for my day of silence:

> The tongue of man reveals so imperfectly the secret mysteries of God, that words would have been to us rather a hindrance than a consolation.
>
> BROTHER GILES

> Settle yourselves in solitude and you will come upon God in yourselves.
>
> TERESA

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Madhi, Mandvi Taluk", 15-3-1927.

Thou needst not call Him to thee from a distance, thy opening and His entering are but one moment. It is harder for Him to wait, than for thee.

MASTER ECKHART

Young India, 24-3-1927

183. FACE TO FACE WITH THE PAUPER

The following[1] is a free translation made by Mahadev Desai of an accurate account vividly told in the pages of *Navajivan* by a khadi worker of pauperism in parts of Bardoli taluk which is supposed to be one of the most fertile places of Gujarat. The account is written in the form of a story. The writer bids fair to become the people's poet of a very high order. Its artistic beauty adds to its intrinsic worth. I commend it specially to the attention of the sceptic.

Young India, 24-3-1927

184. KANGRI GURUKUL

Kangri Gurukul was the body in which the soul of Shraddhanandji resided, no matter where its temporary earthly tabernacle wandered from time to time, and Shraddhanandji lives so long as the Gurukul lives. The best memorial therefore that can be erected to the memory of the deceased martyr is to perpetuate the Gurukul. No doubt, the really permanent memorial will have to come through the character of the professors and the scholars of the Gurukul and through their determination to retain in it the predominance of ancient teaching and conduct based on it. Shraddhanandji used with ample justification to plead that his Gurukul was a national institution in the non-co-operation sense long before the birth of Non-co-operation. He believed that to belong to a Government educational institution was to subscribe to the predominance of Western influence whether we willed or no. He did not object to assimilating what was useful of the West on his own terms and in his own time. To be a fitting memorial of the Swami the Gurukul must therefore keep its complete independence of the Government. And it is a matter of no

[1] Not reproduced here

small satisfaction that the Gurukul in spite of its independence of Government aid or influence continues to grow in numbers as I hope too it does in character, in the spirit of its revered founder.

But if the memorial depends for its real existence ultimately on the character of the scholars and the professors it has to depend presently upon financial support from the public. Acharya Ramadeva has issued an appeal for three lakhs of rupees. I understand that nearly two lakhs are already subscribed. The scene I witnessed when the appeal[1] was made in that huge pandal on the Gurukul ground on the 19th instant was a never-to-be-forgotten sight.[2] People—men and women—vied with one another in pouring their rupees and notes into the buckets with which volunteers moved about among the visitors. There were hardly any coppers to be seen. I heartily commend this appeal to the attention of the public. I have stated my differences with the Arya Samaj and its doctrines. They abide. I have my differences about the conduct of Gurukul. But I am not blind to the services of the Arya Samaj and the necessity of Gurukuls. They have revivified religion, if they have also limited its growth. Every reform has that tendency in it. The wise sift the good from the bad and conserve what is good. The Gurukuls has much in it to conserve and those who would want it to be better than it is have but to prove their friendliness before they seek to introduce changes for its betterment. I have therefore no hesitation in identifying myself with the appeal for funds. There should be no delay or difficulty in making up the modest sum required.

Young India, 24-3-1927

185. PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION OF "SELF-RESTRAINT v. *SELF-INDULGENCE"*[3]

That the first edition was sold out practically within a week of its publication is a matter of joy to me. The correspondence that the series of articles collected in this volume has given rise to shows the need for such a publication. May those who have not made self-indulgence a religion, but who are struggling to regain lost self-control, which should under normal conditions

[1] *Vide* Appendix II.

[2] *Vide* "Speech on Shraddhanand Memorial Fund, Gurukul Kangri", 19-3-1927.

[3] This was published under the title, "Self-control",

be our natural state, find some help from a perusal of these pages. For their guidance the following instructions may prove useful:

1. Remember if you are married that your wife is your friend, companion and co-worker, not an instrument of sexual enjoyment.

2. Self-control is the law of your being. Therefore the sexual act can be performed only when both desire it and that too subject to rules which in their lucidity both may have agreed upon.

3. If you are unmarried you owe it to yourself, to society and to your future partner to keep yourself pure. If you cultivate this sense of loyalty, you will find it as an infallible protection against all temptation.

4. Think always of that unseen Power which though we may never see we all feel within us as watching and noting every impure thought and you will find that Power ever helping you.

5. Laws governing a life of self-restraint must be necessarily different from a life of self-indulgence. Therefore you will regulate your society, your reading, your haunts of recreation and your food.

You will seek the society of the good and the pure.

You will resolutely refrain from reading passion-breeding novels and magazines and read the works that sustain humanity. You will make one book your constant companion for reference and guidance.

You will avoid theatres and cinemas. Recreation is where you may not dissipate yourself but recreate yourself. You will therefore attend *bhajan mandalis* where the word and the tune uplift the soul.

You will eat not to satisfy your palate but your hunger. A self-indulgent man lives to eat; a self-restrained man eats to live. Therefore you will abstain from all irritating condiments, alcohol which excites the nerves, and narcotics which deaden the sense of right and wrong. You will regulate the quantity and times of your meals.

6. When your passions threaten to get the better of you go down on your knees and cry out to God for help. Ramanama is my infallible Help. As extraneous aid take a hip-bath, i.e., sit in a tubfull of cold water with your legs out of it, and you will find your passions have immediately cooled. Sit in it for a few minutes unless you are weak and there is danger of a chill.

7. Take brisk walking exercise in the open air early in the morning and at night before going to bed.

8. "Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise," is a sound proverb. 9 o'clock to bed and 4

o'clock to rise is a good rule. Go to bed on an empty stomach. Therefore your last meal must not be after 6 p.m.

9. Remember that man is a representative of God to serve all that lives and thus to express God's dignity and love. Let service be your sole joy and you will need no other enjoyment in life.

Young India, 24-3-1927

186. TO A READER OF "YOUNG INDIA"

I do not propose to publish your letter in defence of the *purdah*. I am of opinion that the *purdah* in India is a recent institution and was adopted during the period of Hindu decline. In the age when proud Draupadi and spotless Sita lived there could be no *purdah*. Gargi could not have held her discourses from behind the *purdah*. Nor is the *purdah* universal in India. It is unknown in the Deccan, Gujarat and the Punjab. It is unknown among the peasantry and one does not hear of any untoward consequences of the comparative freedom which women in these provinces and among peasantry enjoy. Nor will it be just to say that the women or men in the other parts of the world are less moral because of the absence of the *purdah* system. "A reader of *Young India*" seeks to defend everything that is ancient. Whilst I hold that the ancients gave us a moral code which is not to be surpassed, I am unable to subscribe to the doctrine of their infallibility in every detail. And who shall say what is really ancient? Are all the hundred and eight Upanishads of equal sanctity? It seems to me that we must test on the anvil of reason everything that is capable of being tested by it and reject that which does not satisfy it even though it may appear in an ancient garb.

Young India, 24-3-1927

187. '*IN SEARCH OF KNOWLEDGE*'

Thus writes Sjt. S. D. Nadkarni:

> In October 1921, to a correspondent asking the question, "Is your 'soul-force' attainable by the masses?", you replied: "They have it already in abundance. Once upon a time an expedition of French scientists set out in search of knowledge and in due course reached India. They tried hard to find it, as they had expected, among the learned ones, but failed. Unexpectedly they found it in a pariah home" (*Young India*, 27-10-1921, p. 342).[1]
>
> I had then thought in my innocence that you were referring to some real incident you had read of; and so being as curious as the French expedition itself, I approached you for details. You kindly answered my query personally, saying that you thought the article made it sufficiently clear that it was a purely imaginary account.
>
> Thereafter in 1925, at a meeting with the Christian missionaries in Calcutta you said: "I am not able to say that here in this fair land . . .[2] man is vile. He is not vile. He is as much a seeker after truth as you and I are, possibly more so. This reminds me of a French book translated for me by a French friend. It is an account of an imaginary expedition in search of knowledge. One party landed in India and found Truth and God personified in a little pariah's hut" (*Young India*, 6-8-1925, p. 274).[3]
>
> Now, if you are not going to deal with the topic in the further reminiscences of your life, I should be obliged if you could tell us through *Young India* (or communicate to me personally) the names of the book and its author, and say who translated it for you, and when and where. Is the translation published and available? I wish to ascertain whether the book is one of the two referred to in Yule and Burnell's *Hobson-Jobson* (*s. v.* pariah) as "Bernardin de St. Pierre's preposterous though once popular tale, *La Chaumiere Indienne* (i.e., 'The Indian Cottage'), whence too the misplaced halo of sentiment which reached its acme in the drama of Casimir Delavigne, and which still in some degree adheres to the name ('pariah')". (There is no question, of course, of my agreeing with the English critics' judgment of the French authors.)

I wish I could give Mr. Nadkarni the full information he wants. I forget the name of the story. The book was specially

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 353-4.
[2] As in the source
[3] *Vide* Vol. XXVII, p. 436.

translated for me by an Anglo-French friend when he was staying with me at Tolstoy Farm near Johannesburg about 1910. I had intended to publish it but my treasure of books has suffered the same fate as my other treasures. I lost many valuable books and manuscripts during transit in 1915 and this precious translation was among them. But some of my readers will probably give the information Mr. Nadkarni desires. I have a recollection that the gifted author of the book makes his otherwise admirable story end in a girl of the pariah home marrying a Christian, as if the home where his scientists found knowledge was not complete without a love affair and without a marriage that must tear the girl away from her surroundings and make her less useful for the service of her neighbours.

Young India, 24-3-1927

188. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BOMBAY,
March 24, 1927

QUESTION: Comrade Saklatvala has asked you to be the leader of Trade Union movement in India. What is your answer to that call?

ANSWER: I do not consider that I am qualified for leadership.

But Mr. Saklatvala says that you are the best qualified man for the work.

It flatters my pride but it does not convince me.

How do you say that the Government is weakened by your Bardoli decision?[1]

Had I continued the campaign, Bardoli people would have been done, and our cause would have suffered. There would have been much more tension than there is today. The fact is that the people were not prepared for non-violence and the campaign would have ended in a widespread terrorism. The Government know that Non-co-operation is not dead. They dread nothing so much as non-co-operation. They know how to deal with a violent outbreak but they don't know how to deal with non-violence and non-co-operation. The Bardoli decision was an orderly and deliberate withdrawal, not a panicky rout. The weakening of Government prestige that had taken place at the time of the so-called ultimatum, still continues. It is open to us to undertake a forward

[1] *Vide* "No and Yes", 17-3-1927.

movement at any time we choose. The awe of the Government is gone for ever.

The general consensus of opinion is that your reply to Comrade Saklatvala ought to have been a little more detailed. Do you propose giving him any more reply?

In my opinion I have given a sufficient reply. I could not treat each and every subject in detail. If there is any obscurity about my reply I should be prepared to remove it.

You have said in your reply that you have your own independent ways of organizing labour. Can you explain that viewpoint a little further?

Yes, I should organize labour by efforts from within. It is not so much discontent with capital that I want to inculcate as discontent with themselves. I want real co-operation between labour and capital. I shall convince the labourers that in many things they are to blame themselves instead of blaming the capitalists. As in the political so in the labour movement, I rely upon internal reform, i.e., self-purification. Such reform will command equitable treatment from employers. Throughout my experience both in South Africa and India, I have always laid the greatest stress on the principle that labourers must evolve strength from within. Then capital will become a real servant of labour. I seek to achieve co-operation between capital and labour, in the same way as I seek to bring co-operation between India and England.

Regarding the Muslim proposal for joint electorate, Mahatma Gandhi said that the joint electorate was a happy sign and augured well. He was not willing to hazard any detailed opinion before considering the question in all its aspects. He said the proposed All-India Convention should finally settle the matter.

[Q:] Do you intend visiting any foreign country in the near future?

[A:] I have no such intention at the present moment.

But what about China?

I cannot say anything definitely just yet, but I know I am not visiting China this year.

Did the khaddar message impress the pilgrims and sadhus at Hardwar?

It is very difficult to say. In fact, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji has been trying his best to enlist the sympathy of those pilgrims and sadhus for khaddar propaganda. He is more in

touch with them than I am. He is staying at Hardwar for 10 days during the *mela* and he will be doing all he can to interest the sadhus in the khaddar movement.

Would you arrange more conferences with them to secure their services for khaddar and prohibition work and also for the removal of untouchability?

Of course, the sadhus can do a lot in all those things but at present I have no idea whether I shall arrange any special conferences with them. Pandit Malaviyaji has taken the initiative in the matter and he will exercise greater influence on them than I can.

What specific methods of propaganda would you suggest to hasten prohibition in India? What do you think of renewing peaceful picketing with proper safeguards?

If picketing with proper safeguards is possible I shall welcome it at any moment but I do not know whether it can be renewed at present. Picketing requires an atmosphere of peacefulness but the question is whether that kind of atmosphere really exists in the country. I am personally ready to start picketing the moment I acquire confidence in a peaceful atmosphere, which I don't possess at present.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-3-1927

189. SPEECH AT SARVAJANIK JIVADAYA KHATA[1], *GHATKOPAR*

March 24, 1927

Accompanied by Sir Chunilal Metha, the Finance Member to the Government of Bombay, and Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel of Ahmedabad, Gandhiji paid a visit to the Sarvajanik Jivadaya Khata at Ghatkopar on Thursday morning. . . . After Gandhiji was shown round the stables of the institution and the cattle, . . . the Secretary of the institution . . . accorded a sincere welcome. . . .

[Replying,] . . . Gandhiji expressed his immense pleasure and congratulated the Committee for the Jivadaya Khata. Since he undertook the cow-protection work at Belgaum in 1925, he had longed to pay a visit to the institution, but he had not been able to do so because of his preoccupations. His tour in 1925 had given him many opportunities to study the subject of the protection of milch cattle in India and he had come to the conclusion

[1] An institution founded in 1923 to prevent milch cattle being slaughtered and to supply pure milk to the citizens of Bombay

that slaughter of milch cattle could not be effectively prevented unless those who wanted to do so took to hide industry. The question of industry was very important in view of the fact that hides worth about nine crores were exported from India every year. It was not a sin even for Hindus to trade in hides and Gandhiji hoped to find a tannery in the Sarvajanik Jivadaya Khata when he visited it next. Concluding, Gandhiji advised the Committee of the institution to give up breeding buffaloes and concentrate all their resources on breeding cows.

Mahatmaji said that if he were Governor of Bombay he would have those stables removed to a distance of 20 miles and given not 10 but thousands of acres of land with ample grass meadows. He argued the establishment of a leather factory attached to the association stables in order to run an institution on economic lines. The association should also link itself to agricultural institutions so that the manure might be utilized most profitably.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-3-1927

190. INTERVIEW TO A.P.I. ON MAHARASHTRA TOUR

POONA[2],
March 24, 1927

I never shared the fears of some of my friends that Maharashtra would receive the message of charkha-spinning coldly. So far as collections were concerned, they went beyond my expectations as my estimates were only one lakh, while total collections came to Rs. 1,20,000 excluding khadi sales which were quite as good as in Bihar.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-3-1927

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*, 26-3-1927.
[2] At Poona Railway Station on way to Kolhapur

191. SPEECH AT BOYS' MEETING, KOLHAPUR[1]

March 25, 1927

The little boys of the school had all been waiting in the sun with the handsome purse they had collected and they had the lesson of fearlessness from Gandhiji's lips:

Fearlessness is the foundation of all education, the beginning and not the end. If you do not build on that foundation, the edifice of all your education will topple over.

And to send the lesson home to them he told them the story of Prahlada and exhorted them to declare the truth courteously and bravely without regard for the consequences as the twelve-year-old Prahlada did.

Young India, 31-3-1927

192. SPEECH TO CHRISTIANS, KOLHAPUR[2]

March 25, 1927

At Negala, Mahatmaji was given a cordial welcome by the Christian community. The Principal of the Girls' Christian High School in his welcome address assured Mahatmaji that the Christian community was one with him in all his activities. In his reply, Mahatmaji said:[3]

My experience tells me that the Kingdom of God is within us, and that we can realize it not by saying "Lord, Lord," but by doing His will and His work. If therefore we wait for the Kingdom to come as something coming from outside, we shall be sadly mistaken. I am glad you are with me in my programme. I may assure you then that whatever I do is done with the object of that realization. Untouchability, you say, you would like to see removed as much as I. Well, then, I may tell you that you cannot remove untouchability without whole-heartedly taking up khadi work, for that work includes removal of untouchability, and goes beyond it. Do you know that there are thousands of villages where people are starving and which are on the brink of ruin? If we would listen to the voice of God, I assure you we would

[1] & [2] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[3] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 29-3-1927.

hear Him say that we are taking His name in vain if we do not think of the poor and help them. Mr. Sam Higginbottom, a Christian missionary friend, came to see me the other day to discuss this very thing. Fortunately he met me just in that area where the spinning-wheel and khadi had done their work. I ask you to go and visit such parts, and if you cannot do so, to take my word for it, that there is no better subsidiary occupation for the poor than khadi. If you cannot render the little help that they need, it is no use talking of service of God and service of the poor. Please go to the exhibition[1] and see things for yourselves, and try to identify yourselves with the poor by actually helping them.

Young India, 31-3-1927

193. SPEECH AT KOLHAPUR[2]

March 25, 1927

The Diwan saw him during the day, and he had a long talk with him. Gandhiji asked him if there was anything like a ban on khadi in Kolhapur State. There may have been something like it, he said, but there was nothing now.

Have I your permission then to say to the people at the public meeting in your name that people may go to the palace and all State offices and attend functions dressed in khadi?

The Diwan had no objection, and Gandhiji declared the thing at the public meeting and thanked him for the assurance. He said:

Do not have any illusion about khadi. It is not that khadi invests the wearer with any sort of saintliness. It is the duty of everyone who has the good of the poor at heart to wear it. Even an adulterer and a prostitute may wear it. This is how I would approach them. 'As to our conduct,' I would say to them, 'you are answerable to God. But whether you are able to mend your ways or no, you can certainly wear khadi and do some service to the poor. He who wastes money on liquor is a sinner. He who wastes money on tobacco is a smaller sinner, if you will. The one who wastes money on foreign cloth is as great a sinner as the second if not the first, and the one who uses Indian mill cloth has neither virtue nor vice to his

[1] Khadi Exhibition; Gandhiji had inaugurated it earlier during the day.
[2] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

credit or debit. But the khadi-wearer has distinctly something to his credit inasmuch as he serves both the poor and his country. Khadi immediately takes him up from a lower level and makes him the friend of the poor.'

Young India, 31-3-1927

194. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

[Before *March 26, 1927*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your pathetic letter. I was wondering why there was nothing from you so long. Now I know. It distresses me to find you in such a dilapidated condition. I am writing this in the midst of distractions. I have not a moment to spare. I therefore send you my love and prayerful blessings. I am in the South in April. I must make a desperate effort to meet you during the tour.

When Maria returns I must see what can be done for spinning.

With love to you all,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat. Courtesy: National Archives of India; also *My Dear Child*, p. 87

195. DISCUSSION WITH DR. WANLESS[2]

[*March 26, 1927*][3]

That is an instance where the doctors fortunately succeeded in prevailing upon Gandhiji. There have been instances in which they have failed. For Gandhiji, who in many respects is an ideal patient, as many doctors have certified, also at times becomes the despair of his doctors. The doctor immediately after the collapse prescribed undisturbed bodily rest, including cessation from spinning.[4]

Well, then, take my blood-pressure, before spinning and after spinning, and if you can convince me that after spinning it has

[1] From the reference to his South India tour it seems that this was written before Gandhiji became ill.

[2] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[3] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-3-1927 and *Young India*, 31-3-1927

[4] For the medical opinions, *vide* Appendix III.

gone up to an alarming extent, I shall accept your advice. On the contrary, I assure you spinning is a positive relaxation, it soothes the nerves. And then, doctor, you must know that mine is a code of life far different from yours. For instance, you would prescribe all sorts of medicines. Now I have laid down a course of life, which, in certain respects, I may not change. So if you give me a medicine which is composed of five ingredients I would take it, provided you agree to my forgoing my meal which may under no circumstances exceed five articles a day. So you must either convince me that the medicine is more essential for my health than the diet, or must reconcile yourself to administering no medicine. Then there is another thing. Spinning is a thing I cannot live without. If I must eat and live I must spin. And what a glorious death it would be if you came and found me spinning and collapsing in the midst of it. You would abuse those about me to your heart's content, if you insisted on your discipline as a doctor, but if you are good you will say it has been a welcome death. You must know that I would be conscience-stricken and make myself most miserable if I continued to live on and was not able to spin. Yes, I may stop reading, writing and even spinning, provided I stop feeding too. Will you permit me that?

No, doctor, I may not implicitly obey you, unless you can claim infallibility.

"If we could claim it," rejoined the doctor with justice, "we should not be administering drugs, but be oracles sitting in temples."

No wonder Dr. Wanless frankly said that no treatment was necessary excepting rest for an indefinite period.

Young India, 14-4-1927

196. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[After *March 26, 1927*][1]

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Well, it is not much use inquiring about you now that I am myself in the mire. I am trying to pull myself out. But if God wills otherwise what is my trial worth? Anyway I do not expect to go beyond 13th April, 1928. I have nothing new to say or give. I may collect more, give a little more guidance and

[1] It appears that this letter was written after Gandhiji fell ill.

patch here and patch there. But really the clock has struck for me. To reduce the message to execution is left for you. You have therefore to live and work. If I survive I shall not be of much use for active work evidently. Let us see: "Thy will be done, not ours, oh Lord!" What is the use then even of peeping into the future? Just for the moment I appear to be as fit as a fiddle. And so I amuse myself by sending love messages to friends I can think of and have no time to talk to.

My love to you and Hemaprabha Devi.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1635

197. *NATIONAL WEEK AND GUJARAT*

I hope that Gujaratis will heartily respond to the appeal made by Shri Vallabhbhai Patel on behalf of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee in connection with the National Week. One can say that collecting a sum of Rs. 1 lakh is child's play for Gujarat. This amount, moreover, is required for work among the suppressed classes, which include *Antyajas* and the Raniparaj community. From now on, we will describe *Antyajas* too as *dalit.* The term was first used by Swami Shraddhanand. Swami Vivekananda chose an English word having the same meaning. He described the untouchables not as "depressed"[1] but as "suppressed"[2] and quite rightly. They became, and remain, what they are because they were suppressed by the so-called upper classes. The Hindi word for this is *dalit.* Among all the suppressed classes, the untouchables are the most suppressed. The Rani (Kali) paraj community is also suppressed, and so are other communities, like Oghra, etc.. It is the object of the Provincial Committee to serve all these communities to the best of its resources. This is constructive work which will win swaraj; it is a philanthropic activity and is a part of dharma. I hope, therefore, that everyone will enthusiastically respond to this appeal and the sum of one lakh will be collected in no time, and also that honest people will come forward and enroll themselves immediately as volunteers for this work.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-3-1927

[1] & [2] The source has these words in English.

198. PROGRESS OF KHADI

I have not been able to publish Lakshmidas's letters describing his tour, for I have had no time at all to read and arrange them properly. A good number of useful letters from him have accumulated. I have decided to spare time somehow and publish some of the material. I give below[1], from among these letters, those describing the activities of the Chandranagar Pravartak Sangh and the Khadi Pratishthan Kala Shala.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-3-1927

199. CONDITIONS OF COW-PROTECTION[2]

It has been a matter of sorrow for me to have taken up the burden of cow-protection during the ending years of my life. But there need be no sorrow when burdens come not of one's seeking but when they seek one irresistibly. And so has been for me the case with cow-protection.

Recently at Ghatkopar, Bombay, I had the occasion to visit the institution[3] of the humanitarian society ably managed by its secretary Sjt. Nagindas. It is now conducting an experiment in dairying with the laudable object ultimately of replacing the ill-managed and disease-breeding private dairies of Bombay which are situated in the heart of the city and where there is no exercise ground for the cattle, and where the best cattle are prematurely given to the butcher's knife.

But though the institution is ably managed, it has some inherent defects to which upon its invitation I had to draw the Society's attention. Incidentally I ventured to lay down the conditions of cow-protection which are well worth repeating:

1. Every such institution should be situated out in the open where it is possible to have plenty, i.e., thousands of acres, of open ground capable of growing fodder and giving exercise to the cattle. If I had the management of all the goshalas, I should sell

[1] Not translated here

[2] This was written on or before March 28, 1927; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 28-3-1927.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Sarvajanik Jivadaya Khata, Ghatkopar", 24-3-1927.

the majority of the present ones at handsome profits and buy suitable plots in the vicinity except where the existing places may be needed for mere receiving depots.

2. Every goshala should be turned into a model dairy and a model tannery. Every single head of dead cattle should be retained and scientifically treated and the hide, bones, entrails, etc., should be used to the best advantage. I should regard the hide of dead cattle to be sacred and usable as distinguished from the hide and other parts of slaughtered cattle, which should be deemed to be unfit for human use or at least for Hindu use.

3. Urine and dung in many goshalas are thrown away. This I regard as criminal waste.

4. All goshalas should be managed under scientific supervision and guidance.

5. Properly managed, every goshala should be and can be made self-supporting, donations being used for its extension. The idea is never to make these institutions profit-making concerns, all profits being utilized towards buying maimed and disabled cattle and buying in the open market *all* cattle destined for the slaughter-house.

6. This consummation is impossible if the goshalas take in buffaloes, goats, etc. So far as I can see, much as I would like it to be otherwise, not until the whole of India becomes vegetarian, can goats and sheep be saved from the butcher's knife. Buffaloes can be saved if we will not insist upon buffalo's milk and religiously avoid it in preference to cow's milk. In Bombay on the other hand, the practice is to take buffalo's milk *instead* of cow's milk. Physicians unanimously declare that cow's milk is medically superior to buffalo's milk and it is the opinion of dairy experts that cow's milk can by judicious management be made much richer than it is at present found to be. I hold that it is impossible to save both the buffalo and the cow. The cow can be saved only if buffalo-breeding is given up. The buffalo cannot be used for agricultural purposes on a wide scale. It is just possible to save the existing stock, if we will cease to breed it any further. It is no part of religion to breed buffaloes or for that matter cows. We breed for our own uses. It is cruelty to the cow as well as to the buffalo to breed the latter. Humanitarians should know that Hindu shepherds even at the present moment mercilessly kill young male buffaloes as they cannot profitably feed them. To save the cow and her progeny—and that only is a feasible proposition—the Hindus will forgo profits from the trade concerning the cow and her products, but never otherwise. Religion to be true must

satisfy what may be termed humanitarian economics, i.e., where the income and the expenditure balance each other. The attainment of such economics is just possible with the cow and the cow only with the assistance of donations for some years from pious Hindus. It should be remembered that this great humanitarian attempt is being made in the face of a beef-eating world. Not till the whole world turns predominantly vegetarian is it possible to make any advance upon the limitations I have sought to describe. To succeed to that extent is to open the way, for future generations, to further efforts. To overstep the limitation is to consign the cow for ever to the slaughter-house in addition to the buffalo and the other animals.

Hindus and the humanitarian societies in charge of goshalas and pinjrapoles, if they are wisely religious, will bear the foregoing conditions of cow-protection in mind and proceed immediately to give effect to them.

Young India, 31-3-1927

200. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJEE*

March 28, 1927

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I know you are thinking of me. To say "don't" would be cruel. But to say "pray" would be just. Ill or well, living or dying, should not matter to you or to me. Anxiety would not add one moment to my allotted time. Nothing is yet fixed as to what I am to do next. I am allowing myself to be guided by the doctors as much as is possible for me to do.

"Take no thought for the morrow" is a beautiful saying recorded of Jesus. सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ[1] has a powerful appeal for me at the present moment. The underlying thought is the same in both the sayings.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 9171. Courtesy: K. P. S. Malani

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 38: "Pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat—treating them alike."

201. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

NIPANI,
Silence Day [*March 28, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

You must not be alarmed at my illness. You should remove the inconveniences to Bhai Bomanji and do nothing more. He needs the commode and other things upstairs.

Mrityunjaya promised to observe discipline, relying on which I suggested that Vidyavati and Prabhavati may be accommodated within the Ashram precincts. Do we not ourselves live there? I trust Mrityunjaya's word as much as I trust other persons'. He is a very polite and truthful boy. He has all of Rajendra Babu's qualities. But you may, of course, accommodate him somewhere else if you want to.

Why is the Vijapur case hanging fire? We will not give any interest. How can we? Does Deshpande Saheb decline to work?

Now you must write out the thing for Sir Gangaram.

I am writing to Chhotelal. Write what you can about cow-protection. Let us add no more buffaloes to our stock. Read my article[2] in *Young India.*

Purushottamdas has expressed an altogether different opinion about the Ramachandra lift. Please cosider his arguments with patience. I hope you have arranged for the spindle and have written to Apte. You must have sent over the essay on spinning.

It is good that you gave up your vow of taking salt-free food. Sharadabehn says she would do four hours' spinning and carding, and whatever sewing there may be as also help in the kitchen as much as she can. Now let me know how much she has been able to carry out.

If I can hold on till June I want to come over for the Parishad I can do so even earlier.

Kaka must have himself read to you my letter to him. I have letters in this connection from Kaka and the other teachers. Kaka has withdrawn his attack on hearing of my indisposition. I wish you would all take decisions on merits. You should attach no importance to my illness. You will not find it in my writing.

[1] Inferred from the contents

[2] *Vide* "Conditions of Cow-protection", 28-3-1927.

Today it is just an illness, tomorrow there may be death. Why think about it? Or let us make our decisions after reckoning on the inevitability of death. So that it is no special factor to be considered.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
My programme has not yet been settled.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9126. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

202. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NIPANI,
Silence Day [March 28, 1927]

DEAR SISTERS,

Do not worry if I tell you that I have been ill. Today it is only a small illness. In a few years life itself will pass away. But what does it matter? The *Gita* clearly teaches us and we too see daily ourselves that those who are born die and those who die are born again. Everyone repays his debt more or less and passes away.

I don't say this lightly, but quite seriously. If it were not for human passion there will be no disease. A person who has no passion has also to die. But he drops gently down like a ripe fruit. I hope and pray that I should drop like that. I ever have this hope and wish. But who knows? Passions I still have and they play their part. The state of complete freedom from passion can be realized only through personal experience.

Devote yourselves entirely to your duties. Youth is given to us to conquer passions. We should not allow it to pass away fruitless. Safeguard your purity. Do not give up the spinning-wheel. As far as possible do not leave the Ashram either.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3643

203. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NIPANI,
Silence Day, March 28, 1927

CHI MANI,

Don't waste a thought on my illness. We take no note of the years passing by. Now, like advancing age, is not disease too written into men's destiny, prone as they are to passion? Some pass away in the natural course; but go all of us must. Where then is the sense in lamenting over it?

There is yet no telegram about you; I expect one any time. Be prepared. What is your progress in Sanskrit? I hope your carding and spinning can now be regarded as all right, can they not?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Though this is written on the same day as the letter[1] to Ashram Women, it will reach you later because it is past the time of clearance.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 54

204. LETTER TO RADHA

March 28, 1927

CHI. RADHA,

Did you forget you were forbidden to fall ill? Do not tell me that those who live in glass-houses should not throw stones at others. Well, I had my own illusions and I over-worked myself, for which God has laid me low. But what had you been kicking against? Now forget it; we are faced with the fact of your illness. Well, then, learn to be cheerful in spite of it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Mahadev Desai

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

205. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR

March 28, 1927

I hope you are not ruffled to hear that I have had an attack. An attack may prove fatal. The present one should be regarded as a clear notice: If not today, then some other day—I have stipulated the period till the 13th of April, 1928. But then one who has escaped a catastrophe may live for a hundred years. If we live we will spin and if we cannot spin we will refuse to live. Isn't that all right?

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

206. LETTER TO JAMNALAL

March 28, 1927

[CHI.] JAMNALALJI,

You ought not to have been upset. The light is bound to go out one day; now it has only dimmed. It is all the same to us whether it dims or dies away. That which gives light must grow faint and go out.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

207. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

March 28, 1927

CHI. KAKA,

You seem to be working the wrong way. I may put it thus: the relation continues to be like that between master and maid. You did not think of your earlier resolves; did not consider the earlier letter nor did you wait for Maganlal to come. I have letters from all the teachers. Much of what I have said to you applies to them as well. I shall accept whatever you decide after consulting Maganlal. Don't let my illness come in the way. Make no tentative decision. There should be no violence if you reach a decision on merits. Regard the Ashram and the school as belonging to you all and do what you please without taking my presence into account.

Don't worry on my account. You can all be regarded as wise, so I do not have to cheer you up. Now what is there to follow except death? Let that too come by the 13th of April, 1928. This interval is not too short for the attainment of swaraj in my lifetime. I am growing more and more convinced that only the reign of the spinning-wheel will bring swaraj; dedicate your lives to establishing it, if you all have the faith I have.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

208. LETTER TO VELANBEHN

March 28, 1927

Here is one sick person asking another why the latter has fallen ill. Now never mind if you have fallen ill. I hope you are cheerful as ever; or are you not? In our ignorance we might say we cannot prevent or control diseases. But can it not be said that being cheerful in spite of ill health rests entirely with us? So never lose spirit, though ill, and always remember Rama.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

209. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

March 28, 1927

BOYS AND GIRLS,

You are all students of the *Gita*, and this study should always weigh with you. If therefore you are alarmed at the news of my illness you should look to the *Gita* for assuagement. I am stuck after I finished translating the second chapter. I am therefore dwelling with delight on that chapter. You too should do the same—the body cannot escape due chastisement. What is there to lament over life and death? Those who die are to be born again and those who live are destined to die. Why then be glad about life and lament over death? Yes, there is one thing to remember. Having known this we should discover our duty and then stick to it till the end. You for your part have found out your goal in life, by reasoning perhaps or through faith. Now beware of slipping. You will then continue to play as usual with-

out being affected by news of my collapse, not ot speak of just being laid up. If anyone talks of my total collapse you should prove it to be inconsequential by carrying on your task. May I expect this from you?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

210. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

NIPANI,
Silence Day [*March 28, 1927*]

CHI. MANILAL AND CHI. SUSHILA,

I have got letters from you both. I must say I was pained. The slightest deviation from truth pierces me like a dart. I can forgive Sushila's slip considering her a child with no self-mastery, but there was no excuse for you to have slipped. Now what is done is done—make no more promise to me; it is enough if you keep whatever you have already made.

Don't worry on account of my illness. There is certainly no need for you to be here. You can serve me best by always being faithful in your own duties. Fleeting are the bonds of flesh; they will not endure. Why lament over this, why brood over it?

With a wish that both of you should be noble and illustrious,

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 4714. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

211. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[*End of March 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letter you wrote before you left. I hope you have arrived safe.

[1] The addressees were to sail for South Africa immediately after their marriage.

I had sent a radio set for you, but before it could reach you your steamer had left the wharf. I had it sent within the time fixed by you.

One who has failed to keep one's word should become more resolute. You could not keep your promise, so now you have resolved not to make any. Remember this is not the way to rise; it only leads to one's fall. May God help you . . .[1]

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 4715. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

212. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI[2]

[After *March 31, 1927*]

It does not matter if you omit to give a stamp[ed receipt] when the party agrees. There should be no rudeness, that is all.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4277. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

213. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*April 1, 1927*][3]

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter and also wire[4]. You must not be perturbed. The crash was bound to come some day. You must forget me in the body. You can't have it for ever. You must do the work in front of you. I must not write more for fear of offending the doctor and those around me. I am taking as much rest as I think I need. But I cannot pamper the body overmuch. You must promise not to worry. Merge yourself in your work.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

[1] The rest of the letter is not available.

[2] In reply to his letter of March 31

[3] From the postmark

[4] In reply to Mahadev Desai's telegram dated March 27, 1927 from Nipani, which read: "Bapu has narrowly escaped attack of apoplexy. High blood-pressure still continues. Doctors ascribe it to overwork, nervous exhaustion and advise complete rest, cancellation all programmes, hot months at any rate. Leaving for Belgaum twenty-eighth."

[PS.]

Movement uncertain yet.

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN
BHAGWADBHAKTI ASHRAM
RAMPURA
REWARI

From the original: C.W. 5213. Courtesy: Mirabehn

214. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

AMBOLI,
Friday, April 1, 1927

HIGH PRIEST OF THE LOWLY,

My health has tied me down to the bed; yesterday therefore I could go through your [draft] speech from one end to the other. A person like me could learn a little from it but it is my humble opinion that as a presidential address it will not do. I do not write this in exercise of any right of "veto" that you have conferred on me. I am only arguing with you as a friend.

The speech gives no evidence of a sense of proportion. We seem to have lost it. Another reason is that it violates the implicit understanding with the Rana Saheb. A third reason is that the speech does not suit the kind of audience we are going to muster.

I say there is no sense of proportion because this speech does not take into account the past convention. There is a breach of our implicit understanding with the Rana Saheb that there should be no personal criticism, etc. And the speech will be neither appreciated nor read by the sections whom we are at the moment trying to rouse. If you follow *Gulliver's Travels* and conceive an imaginary country in which to apply your correctives, you could say all that you have said; or if you emulate Aesop you could have a bird of your choice perched on every tree in Saurashtra to expound your doctrines through their chatter. And then you could have instructed us while you amused us. Or like Vyasa you may create sub-human and superhuman characters, reject the past, compile a history of mankind and then give us a miniature *Mahabharata* of Saurashtra.

We needs must train a new class of audience for the speech that you have drafted or that has been drafted for you. Our first task therefore will be to annul the constitution adopted at Bhavnagar. I may perhaps agree to this. And then we should call a con-

ference of such select people as would be competent to appreciate and also act upon the thoughts contained in your speech. We should place before them your suggestions and have them implemented.

I would therefore make the following suggestions: You should call a small committee and place your ideas before them. You may then lay the foundation of your speech as was the practice followed by the Congress in the past. Speeches by Wedderburn, Webb, Bradlaugh and others used to be placed before Pherozeshah, Gokhale and others for approval. In this way a tradition was maintained. This state of affairs, I know, came down to the times of Sinha. Your speech belongs to that tradition. I do not suggest that it is of no use; we want a new society to make use of it. You cannot address such speeches to peasants.

Whatever happens to me the Conference must be held in June. I suggest that at the same time we should decide upon the constitution of the Conference and first put our own house in order. And then start immediately a new era by convening the newly constituted Conference. But I cannot explain all this in a letter. I think there is no sense in discussing individual points when I am recommending a radical revision of your draft.

Though of course I write this, at the moment I am so weak I cannot invite any one of you to come here soon. You should therefore confer with Devchandbhai, Fulchand and Amritlal and do whatever you have to. I would also invite Patwari, Pattani Saheb and Shukla Saheb to this meeting. I would acquaint myself with everyone's opinion and do what appears good for us. But then that is how I think. If you go ahead you should also obtain Vallabhbhai's advice. Whatever you do let it be based on solid foundations.

Wishing success in all your noble efforts,

BAPU

[PS.]

You can ask me anything when you write to me; whether it does any good can be judged by you or God.

Friday—Belgaum[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] As in the source. The letter was apparently written in Belgaum but Amboli address was given at the top for the addressee's benefit.

215. DISCUSSION WITH DR. JIVARAJ MEHTA[1]

April 3, 1927[2]

GANDHIJI: How long may I accept the hospitality of a Chief[3] who has been kindness itself? And apart from the climate, I can be as restful at Sabarmati as at any other place. It is not the heat that matters, though I am confident of dodging even that heat by various devices. And if we are to identify ourselves with the poor, surely we should understand that a vast mass of our people live and work and toil in excessive heat of the sun, and never think of going for a change when an illness overtakes them.

The argument is unanswerable though the doctor who concerns himself mainly with physiological considerations may brush it aside. But Gandhiji has had always the good fortune of having as his friends doctors who, at least so far as he is concerned, are prepared to consult not merely the needs of his body, but the needs of his soul, and try to suit their advice as regards keeping of the body to his mental and spiritual predilections.

GANDHIJI: If then I am merely to vegetate, I must be content to recuperate in my own place.

DR. MEHTA: But you will not vegetate. Your rest is work itself, for it will set you up and make the body stand another spell of strain.

But that rest I can have at Sabarmati.

Yes, you may have it, and yet the heat might affect the blood-pressure, and retard recovery.

If you can find me some sort of work at the hill-station you propose, or if there is near prospect of my taking up the thread of my interrupted programme, I might reconcile myself to Bangalore or some such place.

Work is there enough for you and always. I am not going to cut you off from your normal activity. The strain you were putting yourself to was abnormal. As soon as you begin to feel better, people may see you, offer the purses they may have collected, workers may present you reports of work, and receive suggestions and advice from you. All I want you to do is to continue to direct,

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"; as a result of this discussion Gandhiji agreed to go to Nandi Hills.

[2] From a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2-4-1927 and *The Hindu*, 6-4-1927

[3] Chief of Savantwadi at whose bungalow Gandhiji was staying in Amboli

without taking any actual share in the work yourself. You do as much light reading as possible, and write your autobiography but not attend to piles of correspondence.

I am glad. But what is light reading? Reading that does not tax me, isn't it?

Young India, 14-4-1927

216. DISCUSSION ON NATIONAL WEEK AT AMBOLI[1]

[*April 4, 1927*]

Two days before the National Week[2] Gandhiji asked how we intended to spend the week at Amboli. Twelve hours' continuous plying of the charkha, said I. That was far from satisfying him. He said:

Twelve hours' is all right, I shall also contribute my hour. But you must go to Savantwadi and hawk khadi there during the week, you must try to go to the untouchables' quarters, inquire about their welfare, see if they have schools, wells, etc. Even when Devdas and you go to Savantwadi, I shall see that the wheel is kept turning.

Young India, 21-4-1927

217. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 4, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Though you absolve me from having to write to you I cannot deny myself the joy of writing to you every Monday. Writing love letters is a recreation, not a task one would seek an excuse to shirk. I am better though still weak.

Dr. Mehta came all the way from Bombay to examine the body. He is emphatically of opinion that all touring should be given up for some months to come. He does not forbid reading in the bed or even occasional letters to friends. If I take full rest he thinks that I would regain most of the lost strength but never be strong enough to undertake the exacting tours such as the one that came to an abrupt end on the 25th ultimo. We shall see.

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] April 6 to 13

If the tour is finally cancelled, I must take my rest at the Ashram. I shall come to a decision today or tomorrow. The probability is that it will be cancelled. Even so I shall not move out before Tuesday next week.

But why are you having these attacks?[1] Is it mere spiritual agony or has the climate also anything to do with it? If you need a bracing climate you must move out. How do you find the climate there?

It was quite right not to have gone to Bharatpur. If Shanta is there, please give the enclosed to her.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5214. Courtesy: Mirabehn

218. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day, Chaitra Sud 3 [April 4, 1927][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am eager to know Sir Gangaram's experience of farming.

I like your co-operation with the teachers, but only if it is sincere and spontaneous. If it has come about owing to my illness there will again be some snags. I yearn for such involuntary co-ordination as there is between one eye and the other. This is possible only if we look upon all people as our own. Experience tells us that a team of good men is better than a mere conglomeration of good results. Disinterested action consists in the faith that everything will ultimately lead to good results.

Did you do anything about penetrating the villages?

Take immediate action with regard to the water problem.

How is the dairy working? Examine coolly Bhai Purushottam's arguments against the Ramachandra lift, before you dispose of them.

I shall be there soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7763. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] "The struggle in the heart was going on." (Mirabehn)
[2] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

219. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

AMBOLI, NEAR SAVANTWADI, KONKAN,
Monday [*April 4, 1927*][1]

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

Devdas had to leave you but I did not like it. I could see, however, he could not help it. Maybe now he can return in a few days.

How are you now? Have you been regaining strength? Any complaints?

Is Chi. Kamala studying anything? Do not write to me yourself but get Kamala to write to me a long letter.

None should worry about my health. At any rate now I am keeping well. The old are on the verge of death, are not they? Therefore under this or that pretext they must leave their old abodes and inhabit new ones if they please. But if they would rather leave the cage altogether they might soar in the air and enjoy freedom. But then our case is similar to that of a prisoner who, owing to his long detention, comes to be attached to his cell. We do not wish to give up the body because we identify ourselves with it. I do not know what I wish. As far as my reason goes I do not find it worth caring for. But poor reason is helpless before delusion. The truth will be known when the end comes.

Who is at present attending on you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2880

220. LETTER TO RAMDAS

April 4, 1927

Not for one moment should we forget the fact that we are poor. It appears you have come to realize it.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

221. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

April 4, 1927

CHILDREN,

Look here, make the Satyagraha Week[1] a success. Those who cannot be interested in the *Gita*, those who have no ear for the music of the spinning-wheel, do not at all understand life. Since we ourselves are the fountains of delight, we should know how to derive it from tunes which would bring us felicity. Therein lies real art. It is servile to seek delight from without; true happiness lies in evoking delight from within. If we cannot impart this knowledge to you now, all of us would be adjudged not as teachers but as mere barbers. How can anyone call you unworthy disciples?

I am fine.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

222. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

Silence Day [April 4, 1927][2]

DEAR SISTER,

No letter from you these many days; please write to me if you have the strength. Such letters are no nuisance to me, they do me good.

I am all right. Ba, Mahadev, Devdas, Krishnadas and others are with me. Rajaji and Gangadharrao too are here. It's a quiet place.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1662

[1] April 6 to 13

[2] Gangadharrao had left for Mysore State before the 10th.

223. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

April 6, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

This is from a sick-bed. I had hoped to see you in Bangalore and press my suit. But it cannot be for some time yet. I have no reply to my wire which I hope you did get. You will break the heart of Indians in South Africa if you do not go.[1] Mrs. Sastri should certainly go with you.[2] I do not know that it is an advantage to have both host and hostess as brilliant talkers in English. You will be her interpreter or you can take for her one of the gifted Tamil graduate girls of whom you have so many. She will be her companion, teacher and interpreter. What did Queen Victoria do when she was hostess to the Shah of Persia who knew no English? And you can make it clear to Lord Irwin that you would want to be here when the Royal Commission comes. Lastly, there will be no fear of pinpricks whilst Lord Irwin is Viceroy. He knows you so well. I urge you to reconsider your decision and go even if it is for a year. You alone can inaugurate the working of the compact, you alone can set the tone.

May God guide you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 164

[1] As the first Agent of the Government of India
[2] Mrs. Sastri did not accompany Mr. Sastri.

224. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVALEKAR

AMBOLI, SAVANTWADI STATE,
April 6, 1927

BHAI SATAVALEKAR,

I am confined to a sick-bed. I could therefore easily get the time to read your book on *brahmacharya*. I liked the book. For years I have regarded you as a devotee of truth; hence this letter.

1. Do you regard the *asanas* [postures] as an infallible means to *brahmacharya*?

2. If this is true does it not mean that a man who practises *asanas* retains his vital fluid under all circumstances? Does it also mean that such an aspirant becomes free from passion? You are perhaps aware of a certain process in Western medicine by which a man can retain the fluid but is not freed from passion. This method is followed by those who propose to enjoy sex without losing the fluid. Do our systems mean this thing when they speak of becoming *urdhvareta*? If it were so, the state of the *urdhvareta* would be detrimental to pure *brahmacharya*. And then there would be a lurking danger of harm in retaining semen with the help of the *asanas*. A friend from Delhi writes to me saying that with the help of *asanas* he has attained *brahmacharya* to such an extent that he can take any kind or quantity of food and enjoy almost all pleasures without losing his vital fluid. I did not continue further correspondence with him as I was not impressed by his letter. Another friend writes to say that with the help of *pranayama*[1], *asanas* and the like the final stage of *brahmacharya* can be attained within six months. Him I know. He is a simple straightforward man with no guile. And he goes on insisting that I should practise *asanas* and the like. I have not yet acted on his advice but your book has moved me. I came in contact with many students and I cannot satisfy them all by my own experiments. Besides restrictions of diet, etc., all my experiments are purely psychological. I write this as it appears to me that a section of the student community has fallen so low that *asanas* and the like can [alône] be of any help to them.

[1] Breath-control

3. Do you have personal experience of what you write about *brahmacharya* in plants,[1] etc.? You would be aware that Western scholars of natural sciences nowadays write against *brahmacharya*. I have refuted their arguments with the help of my little experience and by the exercise of whatever talents I have. But it is essential that these Western treatises are examined by our own experts since they greatly influence our young men.

4. I have also gone through your book *Suryabhedan Vyayam*. Do you think there is no harm if a man like me takes that exercise merely with the aid of the book?

5. Am I right if I find a slight difference between your method and the rules laid down in the commentaries on the *Rigveda* and the other texts for interpreting the hymns?

I shall be in Amboli till the 18th of this month.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12771

225. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

AMBOLI [*via*] BELGAUM,
Satyagraha Day [April 6, 1927]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have written to you but have had no reply.

Please see that my capacity to raise funds has gone down considerably owing to my failing health. I had made some provision but it is not available at the moment.

Had I not had the attack I could have somehow coped with the situation.

I had asked Mahadev to write to Devchandbhai about the speech [drafted] by Bhai Amritlal Bapa. It has to be examined carefully. I think the [Kathiawar] Political Conference and the charkha movement should be kept apart. Let it be like this. There are three heads of expenditure which can be arranged as follows:

1. Entrusting khadi activity to the Charkha Sangh as it will survive me and carry on in whatever manner it can.

[1] Non-germination or passivity in germination in plants and limiting copulation to periods of 'heat' in animals

2. The schools and the *Antyaja* work be handed over to the Vidyapith which too will survive me.

And an independent activity for Kathiawar.

We have not yet been able to make separate arrangements to run these three programmes on their own. I can therefore make only these suggestions. Khadi activities can also be entrusted to the Gujarat Khadi Mandal. This can be finalized after we have a discussion with Bhai Lakshmidas. Besides these three, no other programme is, at present, likely to engage my attention. I see however that there ought to be an independent institution for those pursuing other interests and the Political Conference may serve this purpose. But then these are the sick thoughts of a sick man.

You should contact Devchandbhai and others and find out a way after cool deliberation. If you want to see me you should all come at your own expense; that too a fortnight hence. I think at the moment I have not the strength to discuss the matter at length.

God willing, I hope to keep the appointed date in the month of June. But I can say nothing definite just now.

What you do, do unhesitatingly and dispassionately like voluntary trustees.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Most probably on the 19th I shall be taken from Belgaum to Nandi Hills, near Bangalore, where we are to reach on the 20th.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2856. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

226. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

AMBOLI,
Chaitra Sud 5 [April 6, 1927]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have gone through the letter from *murabbi*[1] Revashankarbhai; what he says is right. You have got to know the rules to be observed at meetings and those governing the institution. A copy of the resolutions passed must immediately be sent to the Treasurer. Are there your initials. . .[2] to the other members also . . .[3] the resolution itself. Now you should send to Revashankarbhai . . .[4] copies of the resolutions adopted at Wardha as also of those passed at the general meeting.

It would also be right to send copies to members of the Committee.

Write to the newly-elected members requesting them to send in their acceptance.

How is Champa pulling on? A copy of the resolutions, etc., should have appeared in *Navajivan.* I forgot to give you the hint because I left in a hurry. But then would you not take up the burden of all this worry?

Hari-ichchha and others may live rent-free. Consult Maganlal about accommodating them and then ask them to come over. If you find they cannot be accommodated with anyone we will have to wait for a while.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have already written to Revashankarbhai to pass on the money.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7391. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Respected
[2], [3] & [4] Illegible in the source

227. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Chaitra Sud 5 [April 6, 1927][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have been getting your letters. There is absolutely no breach of vow in your going to Chi. Mama. A visit on such an occasion was naturally expected. Now you should return to your place in the Ashram only after Chi. Mama is completely at rest. You should make Chi. Mama learn this formula: It is none of our concern whether the body falls or lasts, the soul cannot depart. Why should we bother about the body? We should be satisfied with thought of the immortal self.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am fine.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8825. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

228. WHAT SHALL I DO?

The Satyagraha Week has come again. By the time this appears in print, one day of the precious week will have gone. I would urge the reader not to fritter away the week by asking the question, 'What shall *we* do?', but to make the best possible use of it by asking, 'What shall *I* do?' There was a time when we could usefully ask and did ask the other question. And if each one will do his or her duty to the fullest measure possible, we shall soon be able to ask, 'What shall *we* do next?'

The foundation of satyagraha as of nation-building is undoubtedly self-purification, self-dedication, selflessness. Let each one ask oneself: 'How then can I purify myself in terms of the nation?' Rectitude of private character is surely the beginning of the structure. If my private character is foul, I am like "a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal". If then I am not right inside, I must this very instant purge myself and be a fit vessel

[1] The addressee's daughter Mama was ill and passed away in 1927. *Vide* "Letter to Damodar Lakshmidas" and "Letter to Gangabehn Vaidya", 10-4-1927.

for dedication. Government cannot help me or interfere with me here. I must be the sole author of my making or unmaking.

Having ensured a pure personal character I must ask the next question, what shall I do as a national servant? If a Hindu, I hate the Mussalman or a person of another faith, I must at once make an honourable peace with him. If I regard any single person as an untouchable, I must blot the sin from my heart and hug the one whom I have hitherto in my arrogance or ignorance regarded as untouchable and as a token I must render him some personal service, be it only going to his quarters and calling the children together and playing with them. In these things again, I need no support from the Government and yet in doing these things whole-heartedly I have surely brought swaraj nearer for the effort and rendered myself fitter for joint service whenever the occasion arises.

Is there a drink shop near me? I must try to wean an erring brother from going to the house of his own destruction. We began this work gloriously in 1921. Our violence brought it to an inglorious end. Individual effort in this matter is still possible even though the atmosphere for wholesale mass action is for the moment wanting.

And last but not least, I must do my share of spinning, if I have but faith in its capacity to serve the poorest, so graphically described in Markham's words reproduced[1] in last week's *Young India.* I must hawk Khadi. If I have the power, I must induce my neighbour to spin for the sake of *Daridranarayana* and if he or she wears foreign cloth, I must induce him or her to discard it.

Shri Vallabhbhai has approached, during this National Week, the Gujaratis living in Kathiawar, Gujarat and in foreign countries for donations for the benefit of the suppressed classes in Gujarat. His appeal is for one lakh of rupees to support the activities being carried on at present for the uplift of the depressed classes in Gujarat. I would like to enrol myself as Vallabhbhai's volunteer and move from house to house, begging bowl in hand, to plead with my dear friends to fill it, and also persuade them to enrol themselves as volunteers for the collection, and persuade also school-going girls and young women to do likewise, with the permission of their parents, and help in swelling the contents of Vallabhbhai's purse.[2]

[1] Under the title, "Whom Khadi Stands for"; *vide* Appendix IV.

[2] This paragraph is taken from *Navajivan*, 10-4-1927.

This is by no means an exhaustive list. I have simply given an indication of the enormous possibilities of individual effort. Let each one find out for himself or herself the best way of service during this week of privilege. The seeker will be amazed to discover in the search after individual action, the immense possibilities of silent, sustained and fruitful common action. Let not the immensity of a common programme daze or paralyse us. What is true of the individual will be tomorrow true of the whole nation if individuals will but refuse to lose heart and hope.

Young India, 7-4-1927

229. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

April 7, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your sweet letter. You will see that the tour is cancelled for the time being. I assure you that I shall take no rash steps and try my best to give the system rest. Pray do not worry on my account. Do you, Hemaprabha Devi, the boy and Tarini get well?

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Amboli till 18th instant and then Mysore

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
HOME VILLA
GIRIDIH

From a photostat: G.N. 1566

230. LETTER TO NANALAL KAVI

April 7, 1927

The poet says that Damayanti[1], though innocent, was charged with stealing. It was her bad luck. Something like it has happened to me. I took pains and fondly wrote out a harmless little letter praising you, which you did not like. Every morning I ask forgiveness of God even for any unconscious faults. Won't you please pardon me this unintentional slip, for which I apologize to you? Unless you forgive me I will not stop begging pardon.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

231. LETTER TO GOKALBHAI

April 7, 1927

I have your letter. You were certainly right in not reading out my message.[2] A message which the addressee does not like must not be read out. It would have been better if you had not published it in the other journals. You would have missed nothing by withholding it. Moreover a poet's anger, I think, makes him into a milch cow[3]. I will swallow all his displeasures but even from at a distance I will utilize his talents. Please do not worry; pass on the enclosed letter[4] to him.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Damayanti in the *Mahabharata* was accused of stealing because the fish handed over to her for cooking would come to life the moment she touched them.

[2] On the occasion of poet Nanalal Kavi's birthday

[3] Whose kicks one may suffer with gratitude

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

232. LETTER TO NANABHAI

April 8, 1927

I always had faith in *pranayama*, *asanas* and the like. But I could not try any of them for want of a proper guru. Luckily now I am on a sick-bed so I get something to read and ruminate. I am further inclined towards *asanas* on reading Satavalekar's articles on the subject. Being a disciple of Nathuram Sharma, you have, I expect, some experience in this subject. I knew him, but he did not impress me. Some four or five members of our family came under his influence. But being inconspicuous I could not learn *asanas*, etc., from him. Now I would like to know about your experience of the same. Have you studied this? If you have, have you kept up the practice? Please, if you don't mind, tell me all you know about this.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

233. LETTER TO AMRITLAL

April 8, 1927

BHAISHRI AMRITLAL,

You must have seen my letter[1] to Amritlal Bapa. I want you to look into it. After all, his speech has been drafted by you. I want this matter to be settled purely on the basis of principle. We must not let my personal feelings interfere with it. And if it is a question of my feelings I am all for what suits the atmosphere in Kathiawar and is ultimately good for its people. I am for khadi because I see advantage in it; but how could it prove beneficial if the climate is against it? Oxygen is vital for our breathing but what is it [to the trees? And you all are the life of Kathiawar. If I cannot convince you all about a thing, either I should not do it at all or do it in a different way.

I am aware of your ability. I very much appreciate some of the things you do. I count you among those serving the motherland. You have courage which you should exercise to encourage others and contend with me, if you have to, without

[1] *Vide* "Letter to A. V. Thakkar", 1-4-1927.

hesitation. Do what you want to do, not what I want you to. That alone will be the right thing. Surely we cannot shine in borrowed feathers.

At the moment I can take no interest in activities other than khadi or similar constructive work. Being thus engaged, if I have any more to live, it might some day occur to me to offer battle within the limits of satyagraha and if the struggle does not come off in my own lifetime it will be taken up by such of my successors as can do it.

Bloody revolutions just do not appeal to me. I never wish to kill even a venomous snake, not to speak of a venomous man. I know the world has gone in for bloody revolution too for winning freedom. I wish to spend all my life trying to prove its futility. I take delight in this only and so I never lose patience. All the ways that occur to me are but ways of peace. That for me is the straight and therefore the shortest path. You should lend me your support only if it appeals to you and to those who look to you for guidance; otherwise, it is best to leave me alone as it has been said: "One's own dharma is superior to"[1], etc. Lying in a sick-bed, I get more time to think and therefore I am trying to clarify our views and my own.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

234. LETTER TO HIRALAL AMRITLAL

April 8, 1927

Of course it was only to collect funds that I had been to Santa Cruz.[2] We cannot expect to produce khadi there, it can only be sold there. There may well be some difference of opinion in respect of auctions. I see nothing wrong in auctions, the institution in itself is certainly without blemish; nor is there anything bad in the purpose for which it was held. Then why oppose it?

I would suggest that a serious student like you should not draw hasty conclusions. And a pure activity like khadi deserves closer study.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Santa Cruz", 23-3-1927.

Visit the Ashram, look around for yourself, speak to Narandas, Maganlal and Shankerlal, see what Lakshmidas has been doing and then come out with your suggestions.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

235. LETTER TO SHAMBHULAL

April 8, 1927

I see that I can at the moment have my heart nowhere but in khadi work. It may perhaps be a mistake on my part.

> There is the illusion of silver in mother of pearl, and of moisture in the sunbeams. This is absolutely unreal, yet none can avoid the error.[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

236. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Friday [April 8, 1927][2]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have not been writing to you at all, but I keep myself informed all the time about your activities.

I had preserved one of your letters drawing my attention to the expenditure on khadi work in Gujarat. I intended to discuss it with Lakshmidas and you. But that could not be. Let us see if we can take it up some time. I believe your contention is that in enabling the spinners to earn Rs. 29,000 as wages we have spent more than an equal amount and that this is too much. Does this amount also include the expenditure incurred on our work amongst the Raniparaj community? The answer to this question should be that at this stage the work on khadi includes awakening and educating the masses. If this is really so, it is part of our policy; and so long as this policy is followed sincerely we should bear with it as an experiment. But this is only my

[1] *Ramacharitamanasa*, I. 117
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Fulchand K. Shah", 6-4-1927.

view. If you enlighten me on this point I shall discuss it with Lakshmidas in case he meets me sooner or when all three of us meet.

2. At the present moment, at any rate, I am afraid, I have no time or energy to raise separate funds for khadi work in Kathiawar. I, therefore, think that we should entrust it to the Charkha Sangh and carry on such work as can be done subject to its rules and regulations. In this connection I have written to Bhai Fulchand. You may also think over it. Perhaps it had better be merged with the work in Gujarat. As it is, I only see this much, that it cannot be carried on as an independent unit. You may, if you want to, discuss the matter with Lakshmidas, in case he is there, and with Shankerlal. In the meanwhile you may look after and promote the work in Kathiawar according to facilities available in the Ashram and keep me informed. We should be careful and see that whatever work has been or is being done is not undone.

3. Of late you have not been publishing in *Young India* facts and figures [about khadi]. Figures of production, at any rate, ought to appear. You should also keep sending any interesting details about the yarn you receive from the members.

As I have now resumed working gradually, you need not spare me. Do write to me and ask me whatever you want to.

I had a talk with Chi. Purushottam and we are in correspondence. I could not speak to you about this; but the boy seemed to have a pure heart. Surely, God will look after him.

How is Kanu getting on?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9141. Courtesy: Jamnadas Gandhi

237. A LETTER

April 8, 1927

Certainly I do wish that we got out of narrow caste circles. The significance of dharma does not lie in clinging to the caste system; it is strictly confined to *varnashrama*. One never hears of hundreds of *varnas*. But I do not insist on this point.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

238. *LETTER TO DAMODAR LAKSHMIDAS*

AMBOLI, *via* BELGAUM,
Chaitra Sud 9 [April 10, 1927]

BHAI DAMODAR LAKSHMIDAS,

Bhai Kishorelal conveyed to me the news of Chi. Mamabai's demise. We cannot help grieving owing to the bonds of flesh. But when looking at it from Mamabai's standpoint, I realize that she has been released from pain.

I am not well enough acquainted with you but I would, if I may, advise you to cherish and remain faithful to her memory, abstaining from another alliance.

You have the great responsibility of the children. Make arrangements for them in consultation with *pujya* Gangabehn and do what you can to advance their interests. Ask any help you want of me and, needless to say, I shall do whatever I can.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2817. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

239. *LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA*

Sunday [April 10, 1927][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I am not unhappy at Chi. Mama's passing away. The poor girl was in agony. And it was good that you were with her at the last hour. I have written to [your] son-in-law. We are left with the problem of what we should do about the children. The question now is whether or not you should accept custody of the children if he leaves them in your care and offers their maintenance. Please think over this. I am sure you have not been upset.

I have been getting your letters. I may say I am keeping well. During the last two days I have been walking a little.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8827. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] From the reference to Mama's death, *vide* the preceding item.

240. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

April 11, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Of course you were quite right in delivering your whole soul to me. I quite agree with you that we have to evolve an organization and that therefore there should be method about the business. But in your affection for me perhaps there is a trace of impatience with the people who organized the tours. However, all will profit by the warning received. I am taking all the necessary rest amid these very lovely surroundings and shall have more when I am taken to Mysore. Rest is not to be taken at the Ashram. Dr. Mehta insisted on a cool place[1] being selected. And I am to remain where I was to tour during April.

You can see from the handwriting that I am getting stronger day by day. I had quite a fair walk yesterday. So much for myself.

I like this idea of your riding. It should brace you and enable you too, to go to the villages and see something of rural life. Have they provided you with a proper saddle? You should try to follow all the shades of village Hindi. I am not going to be satisfied till you have mastered Hindi so well as to be able to follow and speak the villagers' Hindi. Do not be frightened. It will come because of your love of your work. I shall not be impatient. But, for your work a thorough knowledge of Hindi is a necessity. You will therefore seek every occasion for speaking and knowing it. Insist on understanding all that goes on about you.

Here is a letter for you from Noorbanu whom you must recognize, the fat, fair lady. She recently gave over to the Ashram several thousand rupees worth of her jewellery. She and her husband are just now living at Mahabaleshwar. They have just come in to see me. Do write to her in reply. Their address is Mahabaleshwar College, Mahabaleshwar. Mrs. Noorbanu Pyareali is her full name.

I am anxious to know how the new wheel is working. Have you good wheels there?

[1] Nandi Hills, near Bangalore; *vide* "Discussion with Dr. Jivaraj Mehta", 3-4-1927.

Do you get good fruit for yourself?

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev and Devdas have gone out to hawk khadi.

From the original: C.W. 5215. Courtesy: Mirabehn

241. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVALEKAR

AMBOLI,
Monday [April 11, 1927][1]

BHAI SATAVALEKAR,

I have your two letters and the books; let me thank you for it.

Please continue to send me the issues of *Vaidika Dharma.*

I have with me many young men as well as women. On my part I have made great efforts to keep them in good health while they observed *brahmacharya.* Only disciplines like *asanas* have yet to be tried. Could you suggest to me some methods, as I am afraid, they cannot very well be learnt merely with the help of books and illustrations. . . .[2]

Please send over to the Ashram two copies [each] of *Suryabhedan Vyayam* and *Brahmacharya,* which will be paid for by the Ashram. If you agree to it I wish to bring out a Gujarati translation after assimilating and revising the two works.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12771

[1] From the addressee's reply to the letter

[2] Page 2 is missing in the source. Only pages 1 and 3 are available.

242. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

[*April 11, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

You have absolved me [from writing to you]. But how can I take advantage of it unless I have to? My health is not so bad now that I cannot write to you. Yesterday I even walked a good distance. To write to you is therefore not much of a strain.

Have any of you decided to supervise the common kitchen by turns? Lakshmibehn[2] had definitely expressed willingness to do so. If no one else has done it so far at least she should do it. If there is any defect in the common kitchen, the fault will be that of all. Will it not? You may free yourselves from kitchen work when the men have acquired as much skill as you have at present, but certainly not till then.

Please find enclosed Mirabai's letter. Give it to Chi. Maganlal. I send it as it is worth reading.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3644

243. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 13, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I must write on this fasting day to acknowledge your letter containing extracts from Beethoven.[3] They are good spiritual food. I don't want you to forget your music or your taste for it. It would be cruel to forget that to which you owe so much, and which has really brought you to me.[4]

[1] From the reference to supervision of the common kitchen and to Gandhiji's "walking a good distance". *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 11-4-1927.

[2] Wife of Khare, the musician; she had experience in running a common kitchen at the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, Bombay.

[3] "As far as I can remember, I quoted extracts from Romain Rolland's *Life of Beethoven*, and one thing I gave was, Beethoven's motto, 'Through Suffering, Joy'." (Mirabehn)

[4] For an account of this, *vide* Appendix V.

Please thank the Maharajji and all the friends for the[ir] kind invitation. But for the present I must go to Nandi Hills in Mysore. I know that I should be quite happy there if I could come.

We have kept the week[1] here in a royal style. One wheel has been kept going 16 hours daily. The output has been more than 3,000 rounds of 4 ft. each daily. Almost all kept the fast on 6th and 13th.

I shall expect here still more letters from you.

Kaka[2] has sent a copy of your translation of Rolland's letter. The translation is very good indeed. The original could not be better.

I am glad you met the Commissioner, etc. You are getting your deserts—those of one adopted by a scavenger. You must forget what you *have been*. You have to realize what you *are*. These poor officials really do not know where they are when they see you. They cannot forget your antecedents and naturally get perplexed. You have to put them at ease. When the present King—so tradition says—was enlisted as a sailor he was treated as such and had in common with the rest black coffee and black bread for breakfast. This was the least part of the affair. He was taken for a common sailor. So one day will you be taken for a common village girl. That would be your pride and mine.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5216. Courtesy: Mirabehn

244. *FAITH* v. *REASON*

An M.B.B.S. from Mandalay sends a string of questions of which the first is:

> You once expressed your opinion in the pages of *Young India* that faith begins where reason ends. Then I expect you will call it faith, if a person believes in a thing for which he can give no reasons. Is it not then clear that faith is believing unreasonably? Do you think it is truth or justice if anybody believed in anything unreasonable? I think it is folly to believe in that way. I do not know what your barrister mind will call it. If you think like me I hope you will call faith as nothing but folly.

If the worthy doctor will excuse my saying so, there is in his question a clear failure to understand my meaning. That

[1] National Week

[2] Kalelkar

which is beyond reason is surely not unreasonable. Unreasonable belief is blind faith and is often superstition. To ask anybody to believe without proof what is capable of proof would be unreasonable, as for instance asking an intelligent person to believe without proof that the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles. But for an experienced person to ask another to believe without being able to prove that there is God is humbly to confess his limitations and to ask another to accept in faith the statement of his experience. It is merely a question of that person's credibility. In ordinary matters of life we accept in faith the word of persons on whom we choose to rely although we are often cheated. Why may we not then in matters of life and death accept the testimony of sages all the world over that there is God and that He is to be seen by following Truth and Innocence (non-violence)? It is at least as reasonable for me to ask my correspondent to have that faith in this universal testimony as it would be for him to ask me to take his medicine in faith even though many a medicine-man might have failed me. I make bold to say that without faith this world would come to naught in a moment. True faith is appropriation of the reasoned experience of people whom we believe to have lived a life purified by prayer and penance. Belief therefore in prophets or incarnations who have lived in remote ages is not an idle superstition but a satisfaction of an inmost spiritual want. The formula therefore I have humbly suggested for guidance is rejection of every demand for faith where a matter is capable of present proof and unquestioned acceptance on faith of that which is itself incapable of proof except through personal experience.

The correspondent's next question is:[1]

> In *Young India* of December 9, 1926,[2] there appeared a press-cutting that one Doctor Harold Blazer, who chloroformed his daughter because he felt that his own end was near and there was no one to care for her when he was gone, was fully acquitted. Dr. Blazer's counsel, Mr. Howry declared: "Blazer did a right and moral thing by keeping the poor girl [for whom he had cared for thirty-two years] from becoming a charge on others." To this you expressed your opinion that Dr. Blazer was wrong in taking the life of his daughter because it betrayed want of faith in the humanity of those round him and that there was no warrant for him to suppose that the daughter would not have been cared for by others. . . . I would request you to think over it again, for I think this is not an ordinary matter.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XXXII, pp. 401-2.

For it is evident that you have got no scruples to put a useless burden on society simply because you have got enough faith in the society to shoulder the burden. For God's sake please excuse us from believing in that useless, nay, extremely harmful, faith. Such a faith of yours, I sincerely believe, is very harmful to the best interests of India. . . . If after many more years of faithful service of India, you become . . . absolutely useless to society, will you like the society to feed you because you have got still life left in you or because you served so well? . . .

I do believe that whilst the jury was right in acquitting Dr. Blazer, considered from the strictly moral point of view Dr. Blazer was wrong. My correspondent in his utilitarian zeal has overlooked the frightful consequences and implications of the doctrine he lays down. Indeed his doctrine would belie his own profession. What would he say if a young practitioner chloroformed to death a patient whom he, the junior practitioner, considered to be incurable and therefore a useless burden to society and whom another as a senior subsequently found to be a case quite capable of cure? Is it not the boast of medical science to treat no case as finally incurable? As for myself, well, I do expect my countrymen to support me when I become a useless and burdensome article, assuming of course that I shall still want to live. What is more, I have full faith in my countrymen supporting me if that event comes to pass. I wonder whether my correspondent will have all the lepers, the blind, the deaf, one fine night to be chloroformed to sweet, everlasting sleep. And yet Damien was a leper and Milton was a blind poet. Man is not all body but he is something infinitely higher.

The correspondent's third question is:[1]

In the same article, i.e., "The Greatest Good of All", you wrote that a votary of ahimsa cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula. He will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realize the ideal . . . . May I conclude then that you will prefer to be bitten by a poisonous snake and die rather than kill the same in trying to save yourself? If I am right in my conclusion, . . . that way you will be doing the greatest possible harm to India by trying to save a harmful living creature and by dying willingly in trying to realize the ideal of your so-called greatest good of all . . . . You admit that you are an imperfect mortal. So it is impossible for you to benefit the whole world. It is even impossible for you to benefit the whole of India in all possible ways. Therefore it is quite reasonable to be contented with the greatest good of the greatest number rather than pretend to do the greatest

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

good to all without exception—the good and the wicked, the useful and the useless, man, animal, etc., etc.

This is a question I would fain avoid answering, not because of want of faith but because of want of courage. But I must not conceal my faith even though I may not have the courage to act up to it when it is put on its trial. Here then is my answer. I do not want to live at the cost of the life even of a snake. I should let him bite me to death rather than kill him. But it is likely that if God puts me to that cruel test and permits a snake to assault me, I may not have the courage to die, but that the beast in me may assert itself and I may seek to kill the snake in defending this perishable body. I admit that my belief has not yet become so incarnate in me as to warrant my stating emphatically that I have shed all fear of snakes so as to befriend them as I would like to be able to. It is my implicit belief that snakes, tigers, etc., are God's answer to the poisonous, wicked, evil thoughts that we harbour. Anna Kingsford saw in the streets of Paris tigers in men already taking shape. I believe that all life is one. Thoughts take definite forms. Tigers and snakes have kinship with us. They are a warning to us to avoid harbouring evil, wicked, lustful thoughts. If I want to rid the earth of venomous beasts and reptiles, I must rid myself of all venomous thoughts. I shall not do so if in my impatient ignorance and in my desire to prolong the existence of the body I seek to kill the so-called venomous beasts and reptiles. If in not seeking to defend myself against such noxious animals I die, I should die to rise again a better and a fuller man. With that faith in me how should I seek to kill a fellow-being in a snake? But this is philosophy. Let me pray and let my readers join in the prayer to God that He may give me the strength to live up to that philosophy. For philosophy without life corresponding is like a body without life.

I know that in this land of ours we have enough philosophy and but little life. But I know also that the laws governing the conduct of man have still to be explored and the condition of exploration is imperative and unalterable. We shall explore them only by dying, never by killing. We must become living embodiments of Truth and Love, for God is Truth and Love.

Young India, 14-4-1927

245. CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE

Dr. Martin Hurlimann, a Sanskrit scholar of Zurich, sends the following instructive translation of selections[1] from the writings of Heinrich Pestalozzi who died just a century ago and was according to Dr. Hurlimann "one of Europe's greatest educationists as also one of the greatest among fighters for *Menschlichkeit* and *Menschenwurde*, i.e., humanity and dignity of man but not understood on the Continent and almost unknown to the rest of the world".

Young India, 14-4-1927

246. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AMBOLI,
April 14, 1927

DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter has given me boundless joy. The news will cheer our people and Andrews. And Europeans will be glad to have to do with one whom they have come to know and respect. For me your letter is a great relief. And for your health God will take care of it. Freedom from the turmoil into which our country has landed itself will refresh your tired nerves whilst at the same time you will be doing inestimable service to the country. The present confusion does not admit of much hurry and calculated interference. It will settle itself in due time.

Mrs. Sastri will be of great help to you in South Africa and her presence will mean much to our dumb sisters there.

I expect to reach Nandi Hills on Wednesday next. You will please come whenever you can and like.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri Papers (Correspondence No. 470). Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Not reproduced here

247. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVALEKAR

AMBOLI,
April 14, 1927

BHAI SATAVALEKAR,

I thank you for your prompt reply. I shall try and send you a good student. From the consideration you have been showing me I see that you are treating me as a fellow-seeker. I shall certainly try to become one. I read your book on the *Isopanishad* and was extremely pleased.

I shall write to Bhai Bapulal[1] in connection with *Brahmacharya* and *Suryabhedan Vyayam*. He must not suffer any financial loss.

I am acquainted with Kuvalayanandji. I had sent a young boy to him who being weak was not taught *pranayama* and other disciplines but was instead treated with medicines. Despite the prevailing climate I have not lost hope regarding the practice of *brahmacharya*, etc. There will rise from our midst a true aspirant who will clear the prevailing atmosphere. As yet I have come across no such aspirant. My own *tapascharya* is hopelessly imperfect. I have been observing external, physical *brahmacharya* for nearly 30 years. I have, however, not freed myself from passion; I am trying to. I think complete control of all the five sense-organs is essential for the observance of perfect *brahmacharya*. It will not suffice to have control over the six-fold passion[2]; it has to be rooted out. I believe in every word of the verse: "The yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme."[3] The world is prone to hero-worship. The unhealthy climate prevailing around will soon clear when such a person emerges. Let us work with all our faith for the advent of such a person amidst us. And have not you yourself said that if the message of the Upanishads, etc., is eternally true—and so it is —even today we can come across Uma, Hemavati and Yaksha and, God willing, we shall. I too have read about rubbing in semen and consuming it.[4] I regard this as a demoniac practice. There

[1] Bapulal Kuberdas Patel of the Arya Samaj, Anand, Kheda District, publisher of the addressee's books

[2] Desire, anger, avarice, delusion, pride, envy

[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59

[4] The addressee had referred to an ancient Sanskrit text which says that semen from involuntary ejaculation should be rubbed between the breasts or the brows, or consumed orally.

may be some truth in it but the experiment deserves no consideration, because we want the *brahmacharis* to master their senses. Preserving and retaining the vital fluid is a means to an end and not an end in itself. Consuming semen does not bring about freedom from passion; it might to some extent remove the debility consequent upon ejaculation. This is what the Western method achieves. The root cause of seminal discharge lies in the rising of passion. [And] we aim at annihilating all passion.

That is why I enquired about the *asanas*, etc. Now I understand that *asanas*, etc., are a stage on the way [to *brahmacharya*] and it may be deemed necessary for the aspirant to pass through them.

Have I made myself clear?

I have understood what you say in your book about the *asanas* for retaining semen. Your cautions put one on guard. Even for a married man I see no harm in the *siddha* and other *asanas*. With the help of *siddhasana* a married man's semen may possibly be retained, the secretion however does not stop. How many men can we come across today who go to their wives purely for the sake of progeny? If the term 'calming down' can be used of passion, etc., a married man may calm down his passion with the help of *siddha* and other *asanas*. But then it is another thing if his aim is absolute eradication of desire.

I was relieved to find that you do not reject the Puranas. I was afraid you would be disdainful of the ancient Puranas. Indeed I am convinced that at a time when people were growing sceptical the authors of the Puranas aroused in them a love for dharma with their rich poetic appeal. Our Shastras need to be re-interpreted, as you are doing, in the light of modern knowledge and for the young people of today.

When I am settled somewhere I would like to give you the trouble of coming over to me so that we can compare notes.

I am now reading the *Kenopanishad* after which I shall take up your *Mahabharata Samalochana*[1].

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12771

[1] A treatise, the first three parts of which had then been published

248. *LETTER TO PRABHAVATI*

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,[1]
Chaitra Sud 13 [April 14, 1927]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I do think of you very often. How are you getting along now? When will you be going to the Ashram? How is Vidyavati? Whether or not I write to you, you must write regularly to me. I think I am slightly better now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3329

249. *LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA*

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,[2]
Chaitra Purnima [April 16, 1927]

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I have the letter written by all of you, sisters. I am steadily improving. I often think of you all. I on my part tried hard to bring you all to the Ashram. You may go if you still wish to. You can all live where you like, but spin a lot, study a lot and move about a lot. The body and the mind ought to be fit. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI
C/O SUNDERJI GOVINDJI DESAI
IN THE OLD HOUSE OF RATILAL MANIAR
RAJKOT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4906. Courtesy: Hari-ichchhabehn Kamdar

[1] & [2] This address was given for the addressee's reply. Gandhiji left Amboli for Nandi Hills on April 18; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 18-4-1927.

250. DISCUSSION WITH CHIEF OF SAVANTWADI, AMBOLI[1]

[*April 17, 1927*][2]

His Highness and the Rani came to see Gandhiji on the day before we left Amboli. They were as usual very nice and asked if it was not too late to persuade Gandhiji to stay a little longer at Amboli. Gandhiji said he wished very much he could continue his stay in that scented spot surrounded by picturesque scenery, in fact, he was distressed to leave it, but he could not help it as he wanted to combine rest with work. And then Gandhiji proceeded to ask the questions I had not asked the other day.

GANDHIJI: Mahadev has been telling me all the good things he has been hearing about you. One of these I should like to be verified by you. Is it true that you draw Rs. 2,000 only from the public revenue for your private purse?

H. H. OF SAVANTWADI: Not Rs. 2,000, but Rs. 2,500; but expenses incurred on all State occasions are met from the State revenue.

That is all right. Now you will stay at Amboli during the summer months. Will the expenses be borne by the State?

No, they will be borne by me.

And I hear you are keeping with you a number of orphans. You find their expenses too out of your purse?

Yes, Gandhiji. But they are not all orphans. Some of them are. They come of poor but respectable families. There are many more applications but I am sorry I cannot afford to have more.

Well, yours is the only instance I know of a ruling prince drawing a fixed allowance from the public revenue.

No, you might expect to see many more. The Mysore Maharaja draws a fixed allowance.

Then it is lucky that after having stayed under your roof I am going to enjoy the hospitality of one like you.

Yes, and Gwalior did not draw anything from the State Treasury.

That is to say?

He had his private income and lived on that.

But what is private income but earned from the State itself?

[1] From Mahadev Desai's article, "A Popular Prince"

[2] Gandhiji left Amboli on the 18th; *vide* the succeeding item.

And now turning to the Rani, who, by the bye, is a princess of the Baroda family, Gandhiji said:

Yes, I know one as simple as you, the Maharani Regent of Travancore. I was fascinated by her simplicity,[1] her dress could not be simpler, and I looked in vain for an ornament on her person, except the *mangalamala*. The furniture in her room was as severely simple as could be. I was introduced to the young Maharaja whom it was difficult to recognize as such. But there the comparison ends. They do not live on paltry wages like you.

The Rani smiled thankfully, whilst Gandhiji continued:

And I was not surprised at the small quantity of khadi that you purchased, knowing as I did that your means were limited and that you must live within your income. And now that I know that like His Highness you also mix very much among your people, may I suggest that you will enhance your power of service by mastering the art of spinning?

The spinning-wheel was all the while going on. The Rani nodded assent, and the Chief said: "That's not all the khadi we have. We purchased some at the last year's Khadi Exhibition, and we shall get more from you whenever we want." All this while His Highness dressed in a short coat and knickers was squatting on the floor.

Young India, 28-4-1927

251. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 18, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letters.

You must not put yourself under over-strain. If the teaching overtaxes you, it must be reduced and so the learning. You may make it clear to the people about you as to your physical capacity. On no account must you lose your health. Do you get proper fruit and milk?

I am getting on famously. For the last two days I have been taking walks both morning and evening without suffering any harm. As you know I have replaced one fruit with a vegetable and am taking *bhakhari*.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 403-4.

We leave Amboli today and leave Belgaum tomorrow if all goes well. Nandi Hills, Mysore, will be the address for the next two months.

I shall not leave this place without much regret. The spot itself is delightful. But what has attached me to this place is the exceptional character of the Chief. From all the accounts received by me he appears to be an ideal Chief. He draws a fixed sum from the State revenue for his personal expenses. He mixes freely with his people. He has visited every one of his 125 villages. He lives an abstemious life and his wife is worthy of him. I have met him often and his frank and easy manners have pleased me. Hence it is that I like this place so much. But we can't do always the things we like. We shall be leaving inside of a few hours.

I expect a report of the new charkha.

They seem to have worked wonders at the Ashram. Keshu having spun over 15,000 yards in 24 hours.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5217. Courtesy: Mirabehn

252. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day, Chaitra Vad[1, April 18, 1927][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. May all your devout wishes be fulfilled and may God grant you the strength to observe your vows.

Your attitude towards the children is correct. If Damodardas entrusts custody of the children to you, you being in the Ashram, it would be your duty to look after them. But it must suit the Ashram too. Discuss the issue with Kaka. It is a different matter if your heart refuses to do so. In such cases one does not know instantaneously what one's dharma is.

Today we leave this place for Nandi Hills. Now on you should write to that address. I presume you will for the time being stay with Kaka, so I send this to his address.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8828. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] The source has *Chaitra Vad* 2, which was April 19. But Gandhiji left for Nandi Hills on April 18, which corresponded to the duplicate *Chaitra Vad* 1.

253. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Chaitra Vad 2 [April 19, 1927][1]

SISTERS,

I am sending this letter to your secretary in the absence of Gangabehn. In Gangabehn's absence you should appoint an acting president. Your work should now be so perfectly regulated that it goes on automatically as in other institutions. In order that this may happen, a leader is absolutely necessary. A leader should have fewer powers but greater responsibilities; she should always be thinking of the good of the institution, and try to increase its capacity for service.

It appears that your observance of the National Week was quite successful. It was good that you cleaned the latrines. As time passes you should take up more and more responsibilities, provided always that you have the strength.

Maintain your contact with women who do outside work. You must also be in touch with Rajibehn and Champavatibehn. Write to me, if you know, how Rajibehn is getting on with her work.

My health appears to have improved. To this end I am making a simple experiment. If it proves successful, it will have many uses. But I do not want to take your time now by telling you more about it. I will perhaps tell you about it next week.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3645

[1] The year is determined from the reference to Gangabehn being the president of Ashram women's Mandal.

254. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
April 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter to Baba Saheb Soman offering to come to Mysore at once if necessary and in any case after 26th if required. I would like you to come to Nandi Hills as soon as possible after 26th. If you will kindly send a wire, arrangements will be made to bring you to Nandi Hills from the nearest station.

The growing self-abuse among the students has, as you know, attracted me to the yogic *asanas*, as possible cure of the evil habit. In the course of my reading I saw that *asanas* were recommended as a remedy for the cure of many other ills. During my illness I read Pandit Satavalekar's writings. And I thought that I would experiment with myself. Copious laudatory notices of *shirshasana* drew me to it. And for the last five days I have been trying *shirshasana* for a few seconds each time. I do it in the morning before the meal twice at intervals of two minutes. The practice is preceded by *neti*, cleansing the nostrils by means of strips of thin cloth. I remain absolutely passive during the practice of the *asana*. Sjt. Gunaji assists to lift the body and sustain it on the head. The same thing is repeated at 9 p.m. before retiring. The last meal—milk and fruit is taken at 5 p.m. I have noticed no ill effects. On the contrary, I feel fresher and stronger and am able to take short walks. My appetite has improved. Now the question is whether *shirshasana* thus passively practised is likely to ease the blood-pressure or to increase it. I take it that *neti* can do no harm at all in any case. My blood-pressure is at present 180 by auscultation. During the five days the pressure has not increased. Will you advise me to continue the practice or discontinue pending your arrival?

Please wire if you want me to discontinue. I do not want the *asanas* to be blamed through any hasty action on my part.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5045

255. ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

I had fully intended to report the proceedings of this business Association, which is known by the few, whose origin was practically accidental and which ever since its origin has been trying in the face of odds to solve the very difficult problem of cow-protection in terms of religious economics. A meeting of the managing committee of the Association as also its general meeting were held together at the Ashram on the 11th March last. But through my hurried departure and subsequent illness, the proceedings have remained unreported. The following resolution[1] was however passed unanimously at this meeting:

> Inasmuch as a resolution was passed at the last meeting of the managing committee of the Association (at Wardha) to the effect that a sum not exceeding one lakh rupees might be spent for conducting a model dairy and a model tannery, it is hereby resolved that the said experiment be conducted by and under the supervision of the managing committee of the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, in accordance with the objects of the All-India Cow-protection Association, and to that end a sum not exceeding one lakh rupees, earmarked for the purpose, be donated to the managing committee of the Ashram out of the funds of the Association, with instructions to that committee to furnish an account of the progress of the experiment from time to time.

The following office-bearers of the managing committee of the All-India Cow-protection Association were elected at the meeting:

Chairman — M. K. Gandhi

Treasurer — Sheth Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri

Members — Sjt. Baijnath Kedia; Sjt. Mahavir Poddar; Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj; Sjt. Parameshwari Prasad Gazipuria; Sjt. Narayandas Poddar; Dr. B. S. Moonje; Sjt. Balakrishna Martanda Chonde; Sjt. Shankar Shrikrishna Dev; Sjt. Narayana Balakrishna Kelkar; Sjt. Nagindas Amulakharai; Sjt. Manilal Vallabhji Kothari; Sjt. Maganlal Khushalchand Gandhi

Secretary — Valji Govindji Desai

I had hoped during my tour to collect, from lovers of the cow, funds for the Association. The resolution contemplates the expenditure of one lakh of rupees. But the Association has not

[1] Proposed by Jamnalal Bajaj

more than 15,000 rupees in its possession. The resolution has been taken in the hope that the Association will receive sufficient donations from the public. Now that I must be confined to my rooms for some time to come, I appeal to those who are interested in and approve of the method adopted by the Association for the protection and preservation of India's cattle, to send in their mite, without a personal appeal. Everything received will be acknowledged in these columns. Readers know that the terms of membership of the Association are Rs. 5 or 24,000 yards of well-twisted self-spun yarn per year. I expect, however, substantial donations from those who believe in the method and management of the Association.[1]

I hope that cow-protection workers will not let Jamnalalji bear the burden of collecting this fund.

To look after the dairy, an experienced gentleman named Parnerkar has been appointed. An Indian tanner who has taken training in America has been entrusted with the tannery work. I hope to publish shortly an account of the work done by them. I suggest to cow-protection workers that they should visit the Ashram and see for themselves the work being done in both the fields.

Young India, 21-4-1927

256. TRUTH IS ONE

A Polish Professor writes:

> I am reading with intense joy your fascinating articles in *Young India* and wish to impress upon you the truth that they are the source of power not only for your own country but for the world. And as you have such a wide spiritual experience, may I ask you one question to be answered if possible in *Young India*? It is a very important fundamental question to which an answer from you would have a great value. Do you admit that there is in human thought some absolute certainty, as for instance as to God and prayer, where we might be said to have reached perfect unchangeable truth? Do you also confess that some particular experience led you to change your first opinion, for instance, as to the right of killing certain dangerous animals? Now my fundamental question is, on what particular points do you change your opinion? And what guarantee can these changes leave as to the unshaken truth of what remains certain? How can we distinguish opportunistic change of opinion

[1] What follows is from *Navajivan*, 24-4-1927.

from the permanence of an absolute certainty in essentials? Can you define in what things we may change and what kind of things remain unchangeable? Is independence of each country or people one of those absolute truths, or is there some innate incapacity in some nations for self-government and in others an innate capacity for governing such incapable nations, as the Germans profess to have a capacity for governing other nations and thus justify their ruling ambition?

I have taken the liberty of altering a word here and there in this letter for the purpose of making the writer's meaning clearer than it appears to be to me in the original. Without in any shape or form endorsing the claim to the powers that the writer ascribes to me, I would in all humility endeavour to answer his questions. My own conscious claim is very simple and emphatic. I am a humble but very earnest seeker after truth. And in my search, I take all fellow-seekers in uttermost confidence so that I may know my mistakes and correct them. I confess that I have often erred in my estimates and judgments. As for instance, whereas I thought from insufficient data that the people of Kheda were ready for civil disobedience, I suddenly discovered that I had committed a Himalayan miscalculation[1] and saw that they could not offer civil disobedience inasmuch as they had not known what it was to tender willing obedience to laws which might be even considered irksome but not immoral. Immediately I made the discovery, I retraced my steps. A similar error of judgment was committed by me when I presented what has been described as the Bardoli ultimatum.[2] I had then believed that the country, that is the people, had been awakened and touched by the movement, had understood the utility of non-violence. I discovered my error within twenty-four hours of the delivery of the ultimatum and retraced my steps. And inasmuch as in every case I retraced my steps, no permanent harm was done. On the contrary, the fundamental truth of non-violence has been made infinitely more manifest than it ever has been, and the country has in no way been permanently injured.

But I am not aware of having changed my opinion about the necessity of killing certain dangerous animals in certain circumstances specifically mentioned in my articles[3]. So far as I am aware of my own opinions, I have ever held the opinion expressed by me in those articles. That however does not mean that the opinion

[1] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. V, Ch. XXXIII.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXII, pp. 302-5.

[3] Under the caption "Is This Humanity?"; *vide* Vol. XXXII.

is unchangeable. I claim to have no infallible guidance or inspiration. So far as my experience goes, the claim to infallibility on the part of a human being would be untenable, seeing that inspiration too can come only to one who is free from the action of pairs of opposites, and it will be difficult to judge on a given occasion whether the claim to freedom from pairs of opposites is justified. The claim to infallibility would thus always be a most dangerous claim to make. This however does not leave us without any guidance whatsoever. The sum total of the experience of the sages of the world is available to us and would be for all time to come. Moreover, there are not many fundamental truths, but there is only one fundamental truth which is Truth itself, otherwise known as Non-violence. Finite human being shall never know in its fulness Truth and Love which is in itself infinite. But we do know enough for our guidance. We shall err, and sometimes grievously, in our application. But man is a self-governing being, and self-government necessarily includes the power as much to commit errors as to set them right as often as they are made. I do not know whether this will satisfy my correspondent. But whether it does or not, I have no power in me to give him a more satisfactory answer. After all each one must be a law unto himself, the invariable condition being that he must then walk in the fear of God and therefore continually keep on purifying his heart. A man to be a man must be twice-born as Hindus would say, reborn as Christians would say.

The concluding questions of the correspondent are easily answered. In fact, the answers can be inferred from the foregoing remarks. I do think that independence of each country is a truth in the same sense and to the same extent that independence of each man is. There is, therefore, no inherent incapacity for self-government in any country or nation and therefore no inherent capacity for governing other nations. No doubt my correspondent honestly thinks that Germans profess to have a God-given capacity for ruling over other nations. But if there are German imperialists, there are also humble German democrats, who are content if they can quietly govern themselves.

Young India, 21-4-1927

257. *KHADI STORES*

The following list[1] of khadi stores in the four provinces of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra and Bihar will be read with interest. I propose to publish a list of similar stores in the other provinces as soon as they are available. The list is a sign of the very substantial progress made by khadi since 1920. Measured by what we seek to achieve, the progress no doubt leaves much to be desired. 110 stores in four provinces should, when khadi becomes current like grain or ghee, read 110 stores in a city like Bombay alone and then they would not be too many. And why should it be surprising or unthinkable to have khadi as universal as grain or ghee? Or, if such universality for khadi must be unthinkable, why should it be unthinkable to have, say twenty years hence, as many shops for Australian butter and American wheat as we have today for our own ghee and wheat? If it is patriotic enough to buy foreign cloth because it is cheaper or more pleasant to the eye, why will it not be patriotic enough, when that time comes, to buy cheaper foreign butter and foreign wheat, even though our ghee manufacturers and wheat-growers may become idle and starve for want of other occupations to take the place of the lost ones? These are reflections presented for the edification of wearers of foreign cloth.

But what is the lesson these stores teach us, khadi organizers? In my opinion, by honest and able organization, we can create a universal demand for khadi,

(a) if those who are engaged in khadi production will pay attention to the manufacture of stronger and more even yarn equal at least to the mill-spun yarn;

(b) if they will also study the tastes of the people and produce sufficient variety of khadi;

(c) if by efficiency in other directions they bring down the price of khadi;

(d) if those who are engaged in the distribution of khadi will gain greater knowledge of the tastes of the people and will learn the art of selling;

(e) if both the producers and the sellers will realize that they must give the maximum of efficiency with the minimum of wages

[1] Not reproduced here

and that *self-sacrifice* is the one imperative condition of successful organization of khadi on a universal basis.

I note that private depots assume names after their owners or some other name. For greater convenience, I would suggest their having one name—simple Khadi Bhandar or Vastralaya, with A.I.S.A. or Congress or Private as the case may be in parenthesis. Where there are more than one in the same place they may have consecutive numbers. This is desirable so long as khadi has to be organized and nursed and so long as the various depots are either directly owned by the A.I.S.A. or are certified by and affiliated to it.

Young India, 21-4-1927

258. *LETTER TO TARINI P. SINHA*[1]

April 21, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shall use your Bureau if I find occasion for it.

What is the use of putting me down on your correspondents' list if you don't expect me to do any work at all? Personally I am averse to ornamental list of anything. The sooner we get out of this habit the better for us. After all your work if it is substantial and earnest is bound to tell whether you have the prop of ornamental figures or not. Since the whole burden of this Bureau will, I expect, fall upon your shoulder, I thought that I should warn you against repeating the vicious custom of having any fictitious list of correspondents or members.

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12486

[1] In reply to his letter of March 27 from London, where he had set up an Indian Information Bureau

259. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

Unrevised

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
April 25, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your four letters of which three were received together yesterday.

You must have got the wire of departure sent to you from Belgaum on 19th.

One of your letters yesterday prompted me to send you a peremptory wire asking you to come to Nandi. But I restrained myself. The other two letters were less gloomy. But even so, if the separation becomes unbearable, you must come without waiting for an answer or any prompting from me. The love of the people round you should really strengthen you and keep you there. Your letter describing the affection of the people there is most touching and it would be a matter for sorrow if you cannot be at peace with yourself there. But no one can suddenly change one's nature and if your effort to compose yourself there becomes fruitless, you should tell the friends there so plainly and come away here without the slightest hesitation. On no account should there be a breakdown there. You must not try your nerves to the breaking point.

This is the sixth day here. I am not yet acclimatized. I have not retained the energy and the strength I felt at Amboli, but doctors assure me that Nandi must in the end be more beneficial than Amboli. They say that this is an ideal place for blood-pressure men. There is no cause whatsoever for worry or anxiety.

Since you were so worried about the forgetfulness about the two fasts, it was well that you fasted.[1] There is no doubt that fasting is a good thing even physically whenever there is a nervous strain. It would certainly have been well, if I had fasted before the collapse came. The strain of that day was terrific. But this is wisdom after the event. We may profit by that stupid mistake of mine. I call it stupid because I was aware of the strain and of the merit of fasting in such circumstances. But the Devil is ever after us and catches us at our weakest. He found me weak

[1] "I had forgotten to fast on the first and last days of the National Week which begins on the 6th and ends on the 13th of April." (Mirabehn)

and wanting and trapped me. Your fast therefore does not worry me. Only you will know when to take it and how to take it.

You must develop iron nerves. It is necessary for our work. God be with you.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5218. Courtesy: Mirabehn

260. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
April 25, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have not written to you for some time now. I have been having your letters.

Please have no anxiety on my behalf. I am having all the attention and care that can possibly be given. I have the best medical advice here. The weather is bracing and cool. I shall not plunge into active work thoughtlessly or without medical advice. If your health permits you to come, do please come. But you must not on any account tax your system. The elevation here is over 4,800 feet. There is an abrupt rise of 2,000 feet. It is an exceedingly dry place and without vegetation around.

Your letters have been silent about Hemaprabha Devi. Is she all right now? And how is your boy (I forget his name) and how is Tarini?

With love to you all,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1567

261. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
April 25, 1927

I have your letter of the 29th March. I must dictate this letter as I must keep as much on my back as possible.

I see you want me to give you the name of an Indian friend who could lay the foundation stone for your new hall. The only one I can think of and thoroughly recommend and whom I know personally very well is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. His address is: Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Clinique Stephani, Montanas Sierre, Switzerland. And you must write to him. Use this letter and draw him. He will come if you want him and you will be pleased to have him. He is one of the truest men I know in India. I am writing to him.

I do not like your resolution at all. Here is the text that I would recommend. I know it will be difficult for you to pilot my text. But really that alone will answer if it is backed by corresponding action. The resolution you have given is very vague and will be accepted by the Government of India without any difficulty. For, they will say that they do not thwart any action which the Indian people by their accredited representatives may desire to carry through. They will say, 'we have transferred this department to them. Let them adjust the finances as they like.' Do you see what I mean? Our case is that the Government is not sincere, that the people have really no hand in the matter, and that the transfer of excise revenue to the elected representatives is itself proof of the Government's insincerity. Education is a transferred subject and the financial assistance given to them is from the excise revenue. The Government have thus created a tie. If the accredited representatives shut up liquor shops, they must starve education or impose fresh taxation upon a people who are in no way able to bear the weight even of existing taxation. The remedy, therefore, is, if the position stated above is correct, for the Government to keep the excise department themselves and carry the prohibition policy through and recoup themselves for the loss of revenue by cutting down the military budget. They have as much right to raise revenue through liquor

[1] Permanent address

as they would have to raise revenue through legalized prostitution. If this is your position independently of me and if you can support the position by your own study of facts, figures and other literature, your resolution would run thus:

> In the opinion of this meeting it is wrong for the people of this country to be party to the maintenance of the liquor traffic in India and that therefore it was wrong on the part of the Government to have made the liquor revenue of India a 'transferred' (provincial) subject and consequently a principal source of revenue on which the spending departments of education and development have to depend, thereby rendering it practically impossible for the Ministers responsible for these departments to undertake a policy of prohibition. In the opinion of this meeting the Government of India should have retained the Liquor Revenue as a Central subject and carried out a policy of complete prohibition, the loss of revenue thus sustained being made up for, by retrenchment in the ever-growing and largely unnecessary military expenditure. This meeting therefore calls upon the Government to take the steps necessary to enforce the wish expressed in this resolution.

You may lick the resolution into shape in any manner you like so long as you retain the substance of it unimpaired. I fear that you will find it difficult to carry through the resolution of this character. But really it is the only thing worth having. And if you find that there is no atmosphere yet in England for such a drastic resolution—and I admit that it is drastic—merely put your case before the educated public, and wait for the resolution. The resolution given to you by your friends gives a wrong lead and you know how difficult it is to undo the mischief done by a thing wrongly begun.

I am getting better though I must still take extra-ordinary care to give myself as much rest as is possible both for body and mind.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MURIEL LESTER
CHILDREN'S HOUSE
BOW
LONDON E. 3

From a photostat: S.N. 12475

262. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

Silence Day [April 25, 1927][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

I am relieved to learn that Purushottam is now improving.

I could not very well follow your telegram. I am however sending a wire telling to contact Vallabhbhai.

The replies you have given to various people are all right. I shall let you know if they have now anything to write to me and in case they do so.

I shall write to Bhai Shankerlal about the suggestion from Dastane.

I am not at all satisfied with the accounts of the dairy. There are 21 errors and we must not pass over them. Please revise the accounts and let me have the figures. Go to Parnerkar and draw his attention to these errors. If Maganlal has come there, have another discussion with him. How could so many mistakes and such grave ones escape his notice? Even if they were not grave, their number is certainly alarming. When you send me the revised figures, put the wrong ones alongside. Pursue this matter to its end.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7710. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

263. *LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL*

NANDI DURG,
Silence Day, Chaitra Vad 9, April [*26*][2], *1927*

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. The last sentence in it is incomplete, and there is no signature or date either. This shows undue haste. Sweet are the fruits of patience, as our proverb says. Mango

[1] Parnerkar joined the Ashram in March 1927 and the figures about the dairy appeared in *Navajivan* dated 8-5-1927. Also *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 27-4-1927.

[2] The source has "25".

trees do not yield overnight, says another. In English one would say haste makes waste. It was very nice of you to have made a dhoti for Father from your own sari. If you continue this practice and if Dahyabhai and Yashoda too follow suit, how nice it would be.

There is no reason to think that the Karachi job will not be offered to you. But if it is not, there are other places ready to receive you. These can only be considered when I hear something definite from Karachi.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 55-6

264. *LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN*

Silence Day, Chaitra Vad 9 [April 26, 1927][1]

SISTERS,

It looks as though you gave me permission to stop writing to you, because you yourselves did not wish to write to me. Or is it because there is confusion in your Mandal for want of a new president, even as chaos may prevail in a country when there is no king?

Whatever it is, how can I possibly eat and drink and move about and not think of you? None of you gives me any news about Gangadevi. I take it, therefore, that she is now restored to normal health. Do not fail to tell me if any of you fall ill.

There are at present men as well as women in the Ashram. But suppose, some day, only women are left, and robbers attack the Ashram. Have you ever thought about what you would do in such a case? If you have not thought about it, please do so now and let me know. Do not imagine that such an occasion will never arise. It does arise many a time in our small villages. It happens often in South Africa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3646

[1] Year inferred from the contents

265. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day, Chaitra Vad 9 [April 26, 1927][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You should not at all hesitate to write detailed letters; you should also put any question you want to.

Consult Jamnalalji about the expenditure and do whatever you can. You may wind up anything that you cannot cope with.

After Kashi reads the enclosed letter you may pass it on, if you like, to Nimu or to Mani; I am not writing separately to everyone. Send Chi. Prabhudas to Ranavav soon. I am improving steadily.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Let Bhai Fulchandji have at your convenience what amounts he asks for. Herewith his letter.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9125. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

266. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[April 26, 1927][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Do as you please about Bhuvarji. You must have noticed that he does not get along with Sitla Sahai. I got the notes from the Working Committee. I wish everything is settled amicably. I am at the moment concerned about the safety of our persons and property. I think it is not right for us to hire the services of a watchman. I can understand having paid assistants from outside the Ashram for other jobs. But just as we have to offer our own prayers so we shall achieve our aim only when we are able to take care of ourselves. Or we shall have to have recourse to the practice [of employing watchmen], in which

[1] Year inferred from reference to the letter from Fulchand for reply to which, *vide* "Letter to Fulchand K. Shah", 27-4-1927.

[2] From the reference to intruders into the Ashram; *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 26-4-1927.

case our experiments with truth and non-violence would suffer. We cannot have a watchman who commits violence [against the intruders] nor can we let him suffer violence [at their hands]. If there is to be violence we should inflict it ourselves and also suffer it ourselves. Women and children too should acquire this strength. Just see what an absurd result we get if we visualize a magnified picture of the reports that have reached me. Let us decide, on the basis of merit, our course of conduct since we have not yet lost control of the situation. The East India Company built fortresses and employed mercenaries simply because they had to submit to the circumstances. Should we be swayed by circumstances or should we have them under our sway? I think we should train workers who would keep an all-night vigil. They will have to think of some means of winning over the thieves without having to act in a way contrary to dharma. Let them stay awake at night and sleep for eight hours in the day. Sailors do it without their health being affected by it. They may take turns at this task. But then you may look upon this as a sick man's wonderings. Being at a distance, I am building castles in the air. But you should all think over this individually and collectively and find out a remedy to your liking. But do come to some final decision in the matter. We ought to know who the intruders were this time. We ought to be able to follow their trail since there were so many of them. Those that were injured can be traced. I shall agree with you even if you all came to the conclusion that we should wind up all our activities, because ultimately it is up to all of you there to run the show. Now we must immediately have our accounts audited. You can invite Nathji's auditors or those of the Charkha Sangh or anyone else you like, but it should no more be left pending consideration. Ask the auditors to examine the accounts minutely and critically and to make any suggestions they would like to. Chi. Narandas should sit with them so that he can help them with information.

This letter is for all of you. I am improving though not very fast. Yesterday I walked a lot so that I could take rest today.

Blessings from
BAPU

Supplement

PS.

After writing this, I read in the other letter from you about the arrangements, etc. So according to our practice, the enclosed letter should be addressed to Chhaganlal, shouldn't it? It is all

right if the changes have all been introduced after due deliberations.

I have noted what you say about Sir Gangaram. The description fails to make a favourable impression on me. It is all to the good that you could learn something about agriculture. Ours is an absolutely unique way. Our aim is to ensure that we follow our dharma till the end.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PPS.]

How are Rukhi, Radha?

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7766. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

267. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Tuesday, April 26, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I must write as often as I can for the time being. I shall anxiously await your reply to yesterday's letter. You must cheer up.

If there are carpenters there you should get the travelling wheel mended. Where you can yourself do the mending you should do it yourself. You may ask the friends there for the necessary tools or buy some. They are always handy.

I am feeling stronger than yesterday. Subbiah is waiting for the post.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5219. Courtesy: Mirabehn

268. LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
April 26, 1927

DEAR KSHITISH BABU,

Though I have not written to you during my illness, I have often thought of you and the Pratishthan. I am getting on fairly well and can do a moderate amount of letter-writing, etc. Do please tell me how you are getting on and how the climate of Sodepur agrees with the workers there.

I send you an extract from Mirabai's letter about the travelling charkha. I too have found the parts to be weak. It will be no disadvantage if it is made stronger even though the weight increases a bit. The axle bearings should be metallic and the uprights should undoubtedly be strong. The spokes too should be more rigid than they are. However, you will see what can be and should be done. Mirabai is a most thoughtful worker. Her well-meant criticism should be taken for what it is worth.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8032

269. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

NANDI HILLS,
April 26, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

Do not be alarmed. Though I reply to your letter so promptly, it is not by way of courtesy, but for pleasure; for, I do not yield to you in my zeal for dietetic reform. Only my lot having been during the last 20 years cast in a rigid mould, I have not been able to wriggle out of it in spite of my intense desire to prosecute dietetic research. But now that nature had laid me low, the appetite which was never eradicated, but was only under suppression, has become active and I go for everything in this direction with avidity.

Now to the point. For the last two days I have made one important change prompted by a fellow crank. He suggested my

taking the juice of fresh *neem* leaves by mixing it with milk. He says my case is not one of blood-pressure but of flatulence. Blood-pressure there certainly is; but I am inclined to agree with this friend, that blood-pressure is a temporary effect of flatulence which is the root cause, and he thinks I could deal with the latter by taking the juice of *neem* leaves with my meals. These leaves are bitter. He says they contain the necessary vitamins. I am watching their effect now. Your letter was received yesterday and the change I have made today is to take unboiled milk. This was suggested by some medical friends at Amboli. But I was not responsive. But your letter has evoked the necessary response. My hosts have brought some goats on to this hill and they are milked under supervision. Milk was therefore brought this morning fresh from the udders. It was mixed with *neem* leaves juice and hot raisin water was added to the milk. This in accordance with your letter gives me the vitamins from the milk and in accordance with that friend gives me the vitamins from the *neem* leaves. I am therefore at the present moment omitting fresh vegetables because I am not yet satisfied that these vegetables are necessary especially as I am taking those bitter leaves and unboiled milk. At what point are vitamins destroyed when you boil leafy vegetables? What is the virtue of vitamins? What is the quantity of leafy vegetables one should take in order to get the required measure of vitamins? What quantity of unboiled milk will give the vitamins required? Is it true that mere heating the milk does not destroy vitamins? Or they are only destroyed when milk is brought to the boiling point?

I have tried the nuts in the manner you suggest. I had them reduced to butter. The pulp was as fine as butter. I had almonds turned into milk. But I could not cope with it, no matter how far you pulverized the nuts. They must, it appears, pass through the double process of digestion like all non-flesh foods. It is only animal food which does not tax the large intestines. Before nuts, therefore, can attain the digestibility of milk, the first process of digestion must be gone through outside the human system. I was told when I was in London, that melted nuts had that effect. I do not know how far this is true. I want to succeed in non-milk experiment because I am convinced that milk, apart from mother's milk, is not human food, nor is cooking essential. A perfect food therefore for human needs has yet to be found. From the spiritual stand-point, I have a horror of animal milk, and that it is goat's milk I am taking does not lessen the horror. It merely enables me to respect the letter of

my vow, though I know that the spirit of it is hardly kept if not already broken. I have reconciled myself to goat's milk under the delusive belief that I must live for my work on the earth in this body and so I cling to it at the expense of my innermost conviction. He, therefore, who can wean me from milk, will be in a way a deliverer. There are spiritual experiences which I know have been interrupted because of my taking milk. When I was living rigidly on sun-baked fruits and sun-baked nuts without using fire and this was for several years—the animal passion was not merely under conscious subjection and control, but it was, so far as my memory serves me, thoroughly absent and I believe that I had almost entirely conquered it. All that has been changed since my return to milk diet. I can no longer claim that immunity. I can only say in all humility that though I am conscious of that passion, I can keep it under subjection and appear before the world a respectable human being from whose lust no woman need fear. But it costs me all my strength to keep the brute in me under disciplined subjection and control. I am positive that a full-grown man does not need all that effort to keep his passions under check. On the contrary, the energy that is set free when the passions are kept under control can, if he wishes, be transferred into unconquerable power for the good of mankind. But somehow or other, I fancy that I shall never attain that freedom, that personal swaraj, so long as I have to struggle against the effect of the highly exciting unnatural food; whereas, nuts are fine muscle builders without being stimulants in the sense in which I have used them. Now you can understand why I reply to your letter so promptly.

It is a great pity that you have not yet got rid of your piles. No mere dietetic change will give you relief. Medicine will be only a palliative. I am making explorations into which I must not enter now, because, I am merely on the threshold of them. I am collecting round me friends who have experimented. I shall give you a report if I see any signs of real success. It hurts me however to think that you did not have an operation for want of means. Dr. Ansari is a first-class surgeon. I could send a note to him if you don't know him. He will, I am sure, gladly perform the operation and put you either in his own house or in some place where you will have to pay nothing. You could also have the operation performed by one of the cleverest of surgeons in India, that is, Dr. Dalal in Bombay. There are not one but more than one hospitals that I know will admit you with greatest pleasure. You may not know that Dr. Dalal operated on me,

Devdas, Mrs. Jamnalalji and, last but not the least, Andrews. You have only to let me know what arrangements you would like and they shall be made. Do not hesitate please to write to me of your discoveries about the spinning-wheel and machinery. Of course I am interested in your scholastic researches, and, as a matter of fact, this enforced rest gives me just the time to read letters and to reflect upon topics in which both you and I are interested. From the length of the dictated letter you can infer that I am not badly off though I need to lie on my back as much as possible. There is no difficulty about dictating letters and even sitting up for a time to write as I did yesterday, it being my silence day.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

R. B. GREGG, ESQ.
CARE OF S.E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTGARH, SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 12571

270. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

NANDI DURG,
Chaitra Vad [*11, April 27, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. Cholera has broken out in an epidemic form in Porbandar and Bhai Amritlal Thakkar is afraid we cannot hold the convention in June. Is it true? He has another reason, viz., my indifferent health and I too agree with him. Please let me know the various aspects of the situation.

I have forwarded to Chi. Chhaganlal the letter about funds for the school, asking him to send the amount as and when possible.[2] I also understand from your letter that you have no intention of coming under the Vidyapith and that, if your present requirements are met with, you will later on manage yourself somehow.

I have been writing to Narandas about the khadi work.

Now about the Satyagraha Dal.

[1] The source has *Chaitra Vad* 10, which however was a *kshaya* (skipped) date.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 26-4-1927.

There will never be too many satyagrahis; my blessings therefore even to those who would try to become one. But are we likely to gain any special advantage by forming a Dal? There could be recruiting for an immediate task on hand. Will the Dal be useful as a stand-by when an occasion comes up? Or if we have such an organization, it should, I am convinced by experience, be engaged in some constructive activity. In the event of a struggle, we can draw from it the required number of workers and the rest can come and join of their own accord. What will these 18 persons do as long as there is no occasion to launch a struggle? Of course they do carry on their spinning; when I speak of constructive activity I mean that which would keep them occupied all the time. All these 18 persons have their own business to attend to. At the moment they have no social activity to take up collectively.

Who will build up faultless character? How is it defined? You for one know well that the Satyagraha Ashram exists just for it. And even there, who could certify faultless character?

Satyagraha and the satyagrahis are like the sun and its rays, you cannot hide them under a bushel, they cannot be unmade by your refusing to recognize them.

Everywhere today I see occasions for satyagraha; but where are those who would offer it? Those that would are ever ready. They are preparing themselves and when they have the confidence they will never wait for my permission or anyone else's.

In spite of all this cautioning, I would ask you to let all that you have done stand as it is. It would not have mattered had you not worked it up, but where the intention is noble there is no room for disappointment or for undoing what has been done.

Think of something that would strengthen the bond among the workers. As for my criticism in the first instance you should think it over yourself and then make such additions and alterations as you think right.

When we meet we shall again discuss it further.

This Dal is certainly not in response to those who are pressing us to take up political activity. Their point of view too deserves to be understood. It is a different thing that you and I are not interested in it. They maintain that even today we should carry on a movement, as far as we can, over all the issues that are believed to have a political aspect. Satyagraha may or may not come off, but let us at least present a petition regarding our present miseries. If nothing more, let us come together for discussions since we are allowed to. If nothing else, let us at any rate exchange views and so on.

This line of thought cannot certainly be dismissed; we too had been thinking this way in the past. Your Dal does not answer this expectation. You should find out some simple way for them, or help them find it. One of the ways to do this is to willingly leave the organization of the Political Conference to them and help them with it as much as you can.

As I write, more comes to my pen. But if I set out to "print" all of it I would tire my hand and my doctor will warn me that my blood-pressure may rise.

You should therefore strike the 't's and dot the 'i's in what I have written today. And if you cannot, you should get me to do it on some other occasion.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2866. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

271. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
Tuesday, Chaitra Vad 11 [April 27, 1927][1]

BHAISHRI MAMA,

I have your letter. It appears the Godhra Ashram has at present a good number of students. But then you also could be said to have done good work. You must have noticed however that the Ashram children did more spinning in that way. Did you read Ramachandran's report of Jamia Millia?

It may be said the boys there did absolutely no spinning for six years. Just a knowledgeable, affectionate teacher who had faith in it has changed the entire atmosphere of the Ashram. Many such stories come to me. I do not write all this as criticism of you but only to strengthen your faith if I may.

But I do not want to tell you things, I want to hear what you have to say. How do you feel about Ramanandji's work? What about that of the Punjab? Did you cope with that task?

Everyone believes I should be all right. The doctors here say that I have no illness as such, but that I must have long rest. The weather here is fine. The view cannot compare with the one at Chinchpokli.

[1] The source has *Chaitra Vad* 10, which however was a *kshaya* date.

If it were your responsibility, what would you do about the nuisance of prowlers round the Ashram? Think long before you answer.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3847

272. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised *April 27, 1927*

CHI. MIRA,

I have your cheerful letter. If you can realize every word of what you have written, all your trouble is over and also my anxiety. We really live through and in our work. We perish through our perishable bodies, if instead of using them as temporary instruments, we identify ourselves with them. The more I observe and study things, the more convinced I become that sorrow over separation and death is perhaps the greatest delusion. To realize that it is a delusion is to become free. There is no death, no separation of the substance. And yet the tragedy of it is that though we love friends for the substance we recognize in them, we deplore the destruction of the insubstantial that covers the substance for the time being. Whereas real friendship should be used to reach the whole through the fragment. You seem to have got the truth for the moment. Let it abide for ever.[1]

I do not know how Krishnanandji came to think that I was coming there in June. What I did say—I think in letter was that I would like to come as early as I could. I note your warning. There is little chance of my being able to leave the place before June, if then.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5220. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] "I had grasped the truth with my intellect, but the heart lagged behind for still many years after this." (Mirabehn)

273. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN

April 27, 1927

An illness comes on with a steed's speed and goes away at a snail's pace. If only you girls had allowed me to starve on that day instead of getting fruits and other things ready for me, I would not have fallen ill. You should show your affection not by feasting me but by making me fast. Even if I come asking for food after doing a lot of work, I must be told, 'Now be patient, rest for a while. We will let you have a little milk and maybe an orange.' You can say this to me nicely. Don't you know I often deal with Rasik and Manu in this way? Who would call me cruel on this account? Why must I be my sole guardian? Why can't you girls be to me what I am to Manu? Now when you return, be kind to me in this way.

Blessings to all the sisters from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

274. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Wednesday [April 27, 1927][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Herewith find the letters from Ganesh and Ramachandra. Answers to these are also enclosed. Let me know if you have anything to say about what Ramachandra writes.

The statistics about cows and buffaloes will prove useful.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8701. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] From the reference to the statistics about cows and buffaloes printed in *Navajivan*, 8-5-1927

275. *UNTOUCHABILITY AND UNREASON*

A correspondent from Mahad writes:

It gives me much sorrow to let you know that there was a riot on the 20th of March last between touchables and untouchables at Mahad. There was held a conference of the Colaba District depressed classes on the 19th and 20th ultimo. The meeting was quite successful. But whilst the crowd was dispersing, Mr. A. V. Chitre of the Social Service League of Bombay told the people as they were thirsty and as the sun was very hot that they could go to the public tank and drink water. There were some who tried to dissuade the men from going to the tank. But Dr. Ambedkar the president decided to march the men to the tank. Even the police inspector could not feel the gravity of the situation, and instead of stopping the crowd from proceeding to the tank, went with them. The tank is situated in the midst of the Brahmin locality. As however no one was aware that the untouchables were going to the tank there was no disturbance, and hundreds of them quenched their thirst at the tank with cries of "*Hara Hara Mahadev*". Meanwhile the touchables came to the scene and they watched the incident with rage. The crowd of untouchables then went back to the pandal for their meals. Within an hour of this the Mahad public was suddenly awakened by the wild cry *Gurava* and they were told that the untouchables were thinking of entering the temple of Vireshwar.

It was a false cry; but in no time the temple was filled by an infuriated mob of touchables who had sticks in their hands. The poor un touchables had no intention whatsoever of going to the temple. But the touchables finding no untouchable attempting to enter the temple practically ran amuck, went to the bazaar and began to beat any untouchable they came across in the street. All the while this beating was going on on the part of the touchables, not one untouchable offered any resistance. A few touchables who sympathized with the untouchables tried to protect them; but the furious mob would not be checked. They even rushed into the huts of shoe-makers and such others and beat them severely. The helpless untouchables ran wildly for help; but none was offered by the shopkeepers. The untouchables who were in the pandal were derided by the touchables for not coming out in the open to fight. There were nearly 1,500 of the former in the pandal and if they had offered to fight there would have been a great calamity and Hinduism would have been disgraced. Dr. Ambedkar justified the advice that he had given on the strength of the resolution that was passed in the Bombay

Legislative Council and on the opinion expressed by the Mahad Municipality that the untouchables were lawfully entitled to take water from public tanks and wells.

I have omitted from the correspondent's letter several passages giving further details. But the letter appears to me to be genuine and does not in any way appear to be an over-estimate. Assuming then that the incident is correctly reported there can be no question about the unprovoked lawlessness on the part of the so-called higher classes. For, it should be remembered that it was not the drinking of water at the tank which had brought together the "touchables" to the temple but the false report that the untouchables were wanting to enter the temple. But one can hardly expect sanity to exist side by side with unreason. Untouchability itself has no reason behind it. It is an inhuman institution. It is tottering and it is sought to be supported by the so-called orthodox party by sheer brute force.

The so-called untouchables have brought the question a step nearer solution by their exemplary self-restraint under most provoking circumstances. Had they retaliated it would have been perhaps difficult to distribute the blame. As it is, the blame is all on the side of the "touchables". Brute force will not sustain untouchability. It will bring about a revulsion of feeling in favour of the suppressed classes. It is a sign of the times that there were at least some "touchables" who tried to defend the poor untouchables. One could wish that there were many more in Mahad. Silent sympathy on such occasions is not of much use. Every Hindu, who considers the removal of untouchability to be of paramount importance, should on such occasions prove his sympathy by publicly defending the suppressed classes and having his own head broken in defending the helpless and the downtrodden.

I cannot help thinking that Dr. Ambedkar was fully justified in putting to test the resolutions of the Bombay Legislative Council and the Mahad Municipality by advising the so-called untouchables to go to the tank to quench their thirst. No incident of this character should pass by unnoticed on the part of associations like the Hindu Mahasabha interested in this reform. Let them investigate the statements made by my correspondent and if they can be substantiated, let them condemn the action of the "touchables". There is nothing like the growth of enlightened public opinion for eradicating everything evil, which untouchability undoubtedly is.

Young India, 28-4-1927

Very considerable relief will be felt by the Indian settlers in South Africa over the announcement that the Right Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri has consented to become India's first Agent-general in that sub-continent, if the post is finally offered to him by the Government of India. It is a great sacrifice that Sastri and the Servants of India Society have made. It is an open secret that left to himself he was not inclined to undertake the responsibility and to leave his work in India. But he has yielded to the pressure of friends, especially when it was urged upon him that he alone could successfully inaugurate the working of the Agreement in bringing about which he played not an inconsiderable part. We know from the cables that were sent from time to time from South Africa that the Europeans were anxious that he should accept the honour. Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri had by his eloquence, transparent sincerity, sweet reasonableness, and extreme earnestness won the esteem and respect of the Union Government and the Europeans in South Africa during the short time that he was there as a member of the Habibullah Deputation. I know how nervously anxious our countrymen in South Africa were that he should become the first Agent. It was impossible for Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri whom God has endowed with a generous nature not to respond to such a unanimous call from South Africa. It is almost a foregone conclusion that the appointment will be duly made and very shortly announced.

The first Agent-general will have his work cut out for him. Both the Union Government and our countrymen have no doubt high expectations of India's first ambassador. The Union Government no doubt think that being an Indian and a person of great distinction he will make their path smooth with the Indian community in connection with any measures that they may take. In other words, they will expect him to be their sympathetic interpreter both to the Indian community and to the Government of India. Our countrymen equally surely expect him to insist upon an honourable and even a liberal interpretation and fulfilment of the Agreement. It is any time a delicate task to please rival claimants, more so now in South Africa where the clash of conflicting interests is simply bewildering. But I know that if anybody can hold the scales absolutely even and thus give satisfac-

tion to all parties concerned, Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri is certainly the one to be able to do so. I feel certain that the Union Ministers do not expect the new Agent to surrender an inch of what is justly due to the Indian community. All he can be expected to do is to persuade the Indian settlers not to go behind and travel beyond the Settlement[1] of 1914, for some time to come at any rate, until they have proved themselves entitled, by exemplary self-restraint and behaviour, to an enlargement of the position attained by the Agreement of 1914. Our countrymen in South Africa, if they intend to make the Agent's position fairly easy and their own position secure, will not expect him to work wonders. It will be wrong to look forward to a complete transformation of the old position, because an honourable Agreement has been arrived at and because a great countryman is going to South Africa to see to the fulfilment of that Agreement. They must remember that the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri is not going there as their counsel briefed to attend to every individual grievance. To smother him with detailed individual grievances would be to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. He goes there as a trustee for India's honour. He goes there to safeguard the rights and liberty of the general body of Indian settlers. He will be there to see that no fresh restrictive legislation is embarked upon by the Union Government and that the existing restrictive laws are administered liberally and with due regard to the vested rights. Any individual grievance therefore that he might be called upon to tackle will have to be in terms of the position I have set forth, that is to say, it will have to be illustrative of some general principle of wide application. Unless therefore the Indian community exercises prudential restraint upon themselves in approaching him for redress of their individual grievances, they will make the Agent's position intolerable and even useless for the high purpose for which it is intended. Indeed such an ambassador's usefulness lies not so much in work appertaining to his official capacity as to the indirect service he can render by his sociableness, and by his character, which leaves its impress upon anything and anybody that it comes in contact with officially or otherwise. And if our countrymen desire to make use of the great qualities of head and heart that Sjt. Sastri possesses, they will bear in mind the limitations I have endeavoured to set forth.

I understand that if Sjt. Sastri goes, Mrs. Sastri too will accompany him. This will be a great gain to the settlers. Let the

[1] *Vide* Vol. XII, Appendix XXV.

Indian sisters in South Africa gather round Mrs. Sastri and surround her with every affection. They will find in her an invaluable instrument of social service. She will act as a leaven in their midst to raise the general tone among the many thousand Indian sisters who are scattered throughout South Africa.

Young India, 28-4-1927

277. A TERRIBLE CONTRAST

A friend having for the first time seen New Delhi and the Assembly Hall in March last writes:[1]

> I was the other day for the first time in the Assembly Hall and it was for the first time then that I saw New Delhi also. I could see how millions must have been poured into the construction of New Delhi to make it so imposing. The Assembly Hall too presents an equally imposing appearance. But as I came out of the Assembly Hall, I saw dilapidated huts which turned out to be the labour camp where I thought must be living the coolies working at the construction of New Delhi. . . .
>
> The contrast between the palaces built in New Delhi for wealthy people and the miserable huts allotted to the people whose labour was responsible for the palaces was too terrible for contemplation. . . .
>
> How, I thought to myself, could the members of the Assembly day after day miss the horrible contrast which I could see even during the few moments that I was in New Delhi? . . .
>
> I have said nothing to any of the members. But could you not do anything in this matter? I have said nothing because I could influence no one; but you may think it worth while doing something. You are a friend of the poor and might be able to secure some relief. Anyway I could not help disburdening myself to you.

I have summarized the main contents of the letter which my fair correspondent has written in Hindi. The criminal disparity that exists between the condition of labour and that of capital is no new thing in modern times. The discovery made by the friend reminds one of the discovery said to have been made centuries ago by Gautama Buddha. It was no new thing he saw. But the shock received by the sight of old age, disease and other miseries of life transformed his life and materially affected the fortunes of the world. It is well that this lady has received her first shock. If

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

she and the other cultured women of India, who have received their education at the expense of the very poor people of whom the correspondent writes so pathetically, will dive deeper and make some slight return to these poor people by making common cause with them, some alleviation in their distressful condition will not be long in coming. Every palace that one sees in India is a demonstration not of her riches but of the insolence of power that riches give to the few, who owe them to the miserably requited labours of the millions of the paupers of India. We have a Government which is based upon and which only exists by the exploitation of the toiling millions.

A friend sent me the other day a cutting from an English newspaper which considered Rs. 1,500 for an Englishman to be not enough for his wants in India, and it warned Englishmen from venturing out to India if they could get not more than Rs. 1,500 per month. There is no need to quarrel with that standard. From the writer's own standpoint, Rs. 1,500 per month is demonstrably inadequate because he regards club life, a motor-car, migration to a hill-station during the hot months, education of children in England to be the necessary minimum. All one can say and one must say about this standard is, that if it is the indispensable minimum, it is a standard too expensive for India to afford; and however beneficial in the abstract may the services of English officials be demonstrated to be, if the toiling millions are to live, they must get along without these beneficial services for the simple reason that the benefit is beyond the reach of their pockets. I suppose it is possible to demonstrate that if the millions of India could be translated to some bracing Himalayan plateau, they would be able to double the length of their days on earth. But it is a proposition which they will laugh out of court as beyond their reach.

What the lady observed in New Delhi is but a tiny symptom of an ever-growing and deep-seated disease which is daily destroying the lives of thousands of people. It is quite possible to imagine that if an energetic member of the Assembly moved a resolution calling upon the Government to provide better housing accommodation for the labourers, the resolution would be carried, that it would not be vetoed and that the Government would gladly give effect to it at the expense of millions poorer still than these labourers. I am sure that this is not what the fair friend really desires. What she desires in common with every Indian who knows anything of the country is a radical change in the system of government which is top-heavy and which under its in-

tolerable weight is crushing day after day the poor inhabitants of this country who are groaning at the bottom. I have pointed the way out of this difficult situation times without number. I do not know another.

Young India, 28-4-1927

278. NOTES

Khaddar and Prem Mahavidyalaya

Acharya Gidwani has been slowly but surely revolutionizing the mentality of the boys learning in Prem Mahavidyalaya at Brindaban. In the course of a letter he says:

> I do not boast of my khaddar work in this Mahavidyalaya; but I can safely assure you that you will not be disappointed when you see it. Beginning with gentle pressure I have arrived at a stage when every teacher and student wears khaddar without grudging and everyone spins on *takli* for 45 minutes daily. Carding is done by turns and weaving is taught to select students. Dyeing has been started. About Rs. 2,000 worth of khaddar has been sold through the Prem Mahavidyalaya during the session, and everyone in Muttra and the neighbourhood looks upon the Prem Mahavidyalaya as a stronghold of *shuddha* khaddar. Two tailors have been busy sewing exclusively khaddar for months in the Mahavidyalaya and will continue doing so.

I congratulate Acharya Gidwani and his staff and students. His performance reminds me of a similar performance reported in these columns with reference to the Jamia Millia of Delhi. These two instances and more can be quoted to shew that where there are earnestness and faith there is no difficulty about response from students. I have said repeatedly that it is the easiest thing to popularize khaddar and hand-spinning in schools if the teachers have faith combined with knowledge and perseverance. I know of no school where these three conditions being fulfilled there has been failure.

Young India, 28-4-1927

279. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

NANDI HILLS,
April 28, 1927

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

It was a treat to receive your letter. But you will remember that you owe me a medical visit—can't call it professional because a professional visit will carry with it Rs. 1,000 per day if not more, now that you have been twice to Europe since the promise of a visit. And, is not each European visit supposed to add to the capacity of doctors and lawyers and therefore also their daily fees? Meanwhile, I shall bear your instructions in my mind. My chief difficulty is how to control the mind and not to let it think, unless I develop *dementia*. If you say I may not reduce my thoughts to writing or not even give utterance by speech even in the shape of conversation, I can somewhat understand; but I do not know how I can prevent the doings of Hindus and Mussalmans from making me think furiously. Nor do I know how to prevent the growing starvation of millions acting upon my mind. I do not need to read papers and get information to make me continuously think of these things. The only way to prevent me from thinking of these things is for Hindus and Mussalmans to behave like human beings rather than sub-human animals and for all of us who get more than our share of our daily bread to think of the vast majority of the teeming millions and for their sakes to discard foreign cloth and for their encouragement to spin during every idle moment.

If it is really a fact that high blood-pressure is due to an overwrought brain, I seriously contend that the only way to remove this tension would be to prescribe a starvation cure. Deep down in me I do feel that a prolonged fast is the only radical cure because during the 21 days fast[1], I could see that after 10 days I had ceased even to think of the outside world. The starvation had created that temporary mental adjustment. Whilst I am eating even if it was possible the mind refuses not to think. But under starvation the mind will co-operate in ceasing to think and worry. And, if in spite of the care that I am myself taking and in spite of the army of medical friends who see me and examine me, in spite of the quacks

[1] From September 17 to October 8, 1924; *vide* Vol. XXV.

whose opinion I voluntarily seek and in spite of the undivided attention of devoted nurses, blood-pressure refuses to yield and weakness persists, I shall certainly risk causing temporary pain to many friends and impose a fast upon myself either to end or to mend this vegetating and vexing state. But there is no cause for any alarm. It seems that the pressure will go down. For the last two days I am feeling stronger than when I came to Nandi. The highest pressure during last week was 188. On Tuesday last it was found to be 180. This was the first decline yet noticed after the collapse.

This hill is 4,850 feet, therefore, not so high as Ooty nor so cold; but it is cool enough and Doctor Mehta considers that I should not [go] to a higher altitude. Others again say that higher the altitude the better it is for . . .[1] When doctors differ what is a poor patient to do? Some day when you are free I shall certainly expect you when we shall talk not merely of my health but about several other things of infinitely greater importance.

Please give my love to all who think of me and accept it for yourself.

Yours sincerely,

From the photostats: S.N. 14119 & 12949

280. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

NANDI HILLS,
April 28, 1927

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

Your letter is a tonic for me. You are realizing all my expectations. I am delighted that the kitchen is in a perfect state now. Who is your right-hand man? How is Giriraj doing? Are you keeping perfect health? Your kitchen must become a treasure store of health of mind, body and spirit. There must be all about it and for all times a sweetness, restfulness and peacefulness which should be capable of being detected by any passer-by. Everything in its place, everything clean, no foreign smells of a multiplicity of condiments, only the natural smell of simple edibles and workers working harmoniously, contentedly and smilingly in their own persons showing perfect health. Do you know that the *rishis* of old were poets, philosophers, cooks, scavengers all rolled into one? Nalaraja was a wise ruler, an ideal husband and a

[1] The source is blank here.

finished cook. Every occupation may become disgraced by bad associations and every occupation can become a stepping-stone to salvation when it is undertaken by a wise man.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 14120

281. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised *April 28/29, 1927*

CHI. MIRA,

Your latest letter is still more cheerful. I hope this mood will last. I very nearly sent you a card in Hindi today. But it was too late. This [is] written after the receipt of the post, but also after its departure which precedes the receipt.

I have made a slight change in the food here which is approved by a distinguished doctor who is living nearby. I am now taking raw milk and adding now and then juice of a few *neem* leaves and have omitted chapatis and vegetables for the time being. I may revert to the latter two if it becomes necessary. There is now noticed a decline in the blood-pressure for the first time since the collapse. I am feeling altogether better.

The rest through Mahadev.

With love,

BAPU

29th Morning

You should certainly translate Rolland's book. But if you are at peace with yourself now your permanent attainment of internal peace is far more important than anything else. You like the people there. You can therefore give them much and take also. I would like you if you can to grow to your full height there before you leave. My suggestion then is that you should set apart religiously an hour daily for translation and make such progress as you can. Meanwhile, God might open the way for me to stay there for the necessary time and the facts may be revised in consultation with Mahadev. Or when you feel that your work there is finished you can come wherever I am if I do not come there soon enough. But you shall decide what to do. I have told you you are free to come here whenever you like. Only do not please regard the translation work more important than what you are

doing there. If a man is to be judged by his deeds and not by whatever the sanest man of the age may from a distant study of him say of him then the lives of co-workers will be the best judgment on me. You understand what I mean, do you not?

I fancy I have forgotten to answer a question you asked in one of your letters. Undoubtedly the interpretation of your vow is that your last meal should be finished before 7 p.m. or dusk whichever the vow is. You are therefore right in your interpretation. The rule regarding vows is when in doubt interpret against yourself, i.e., in favour of greater restriction.

BAPU

[PS.]

Please tell Lady Slade[1] I am thankful for her concern about me.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5221. Courtesy: Mirabehn

282. *LETTER TO JAGJIVANDAS NARAYANDAS MEHTA*

NANDI HILLS,
April 30, 1927

Do a fine job of what you take up as a trust. You should give up the work at Lathi if you are doubtful about it or cannot cope with it.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 69

283. *LETTER TO SUMANT MEHTA*

April 30, 1927

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. Indeed you have presented an abstract discussion. Well, I like that too, but at the moment you are in the land of Narasinh Mehta; so I am reminded of his morning hymn.

For the present let us vie with each other in getting well quick. Please convey my congratulations to Bhai Raichura on the privilege of serving you. *Vandemataram* to Sharadabehn.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Addressee's mother

284. LETTER TO NIMU

April 30, 1927

CHI. NIMU,

Next year you will be married, and begin a new life. I want you and Ramdas to get ready and prepare yourselves for it. I write this to you after I have written to Ramdas. I have long since been corresponding with Ramdas. Go through the enclosed extract from Ramdas's letter.

I wish both of you would devote your lives to service; Ramdas does wish to. You should earn your livelihood too from it, as Maganlal does and many others too. I wish you two could become an ideal couple, for which you should begin your efforts from now on. Whatever time you can spare from your household duties you may devote to khadi work, for which you too would be paid. I have been doing it in two cases; one of Chi. [Kishorelal] and Gomatibehn and the other of Thakkar and his wife. But you can surpass them both. The job that you are required to do will be easy but you will get the satisfaction that you can earn on your own, and one should always try to prove that one can. You can run your home along with this occupation, and, I think, you can also look after your children when you have them. Thousands of husbands and wives from poor families earn their living in this way. You know yourself the cases of Dudabhai and Danibehn, of Ramjibhai and Gangabehn. We shall also remain poor alongside of them. Only then shall we be fit to realize God.

For accomplishing this you ought to improve your ginning, carding and spinning. Side by side, you must improve your knowledge of Gujarati and pick up some book-keeping. You can find time for all this. You must improve your health too. Sanskrit and so on are of course to be there.

* * *[1]

Consider all this and write to me frankly what you think about it. Write to me as a daughter would speak to her mother without reserve, or like two friends opening their hearts to each other. Write to me what you want to do without bothering about my likes. Tell me frankly about anything in my letter that you do

[1] As in the source

not approve. Nothing can be accomplished by force; something will be by what you willingly undertake to do.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

285. LETTER TO SITARAM PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN[1]

April 30, 1927

In my article[2] about buffaloes I have said nothing about destroying them; on the contrary an attempt should be made to raise their breed. Where the need for a thing is real it will surely be protected. What I mean is that cow-protection alone can be part of dharma. It includes compassion for other animals. But these are not being destroyed. There is no need to take up the stupendous task of stopping their destruction. And if we are able to protect the cow, all else that needs to be done will be accomplished automatically. It is not the purport of my writing to ignore the buffalo. I only indicate the limit of our ability. Even the villages ought to have something in the nature of a tannery, a dairy. In other words, the tanning process in the villages needs to be improved. There is need for some sophistication in the manner of skinning. There should be some expert experimenting with regard to the cow; there has to be knowledge of the methods of increasing their yield. It is our misfortune that today we can only carry this knowledge from the town to the country. At the moment we are not even aware of this science. I mean, we shall be able to do nothing before those who have learnt it in the West evolve it anew with an appreciation of the local environment and in an assimilable form. So, for the time being, we shall only be experimenting, the point being that an industry which is today handled mainly by ignorant men for earning a livelihood should be taken up by the educated class, keeping in view our country's welfare, as is being done in the case of spinning and weaving. Efforts in the direction have now been initiated in the Ashram.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

1 Alias Appa

2 *Vide* "Conditions of Cow-protection", pp. 197-9.

286. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[*April 30, 1927*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. It is very good that you have started.

The letter from Khushalbhai is nice; please let me know what you wrote in reply to him. Service does include one's interest. One who serves with a pure heart is always provided for by God. It certainly is an inexhaustible source of learning. No sincere worker has ever starved. Maganlal and others have lost nothing, on the contrary they have ennobled their lives and attained their goal.

If you feel that you lack aptitude for doing a thing, this shortcoming can certainly be removed by trying hard. Experience will bring all the knowledge one needs. There will be no difficulty whatever in raising a grand edifice on the foundations of noble character.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6856

287. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI[2]

NANDI HILLS,
April 30, 1927

DEAR LALAJI,

I got your letter and the Trust papers. Let me congratulate you on your decision. This amount, I am afraid, will not be sufficient; we will require yet more funds, for which we must wait.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Lala Lajpat Rai—Ek Jeevani, p. 468

[1] The concluding paragraph of the letter appears in the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary under this date.

[2] The English original is not traceable; *vide* also "Letter to Lajpat Rai", 1-5-1927.

288. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Saturday [April 30, 1927][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Well, I have nothing to say today. I only write so that you may know that nowadays I am rather worried about you. God will take care of you. Do you understand what I say?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 5222. Courtesy: Mirabehn

289. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI[2]

May 1, 1927

DEAR LALAJI,

The afore-mentioned letter[3] was written last night. I did not fully reveal my feelings. My congratulations were not without a tinge of criticism. Let me now say it out.

The idea is laudable but your method of implementing it has its own flaws. Your wife and children should not become the trustees. Your trustees should be those who entirely agree with your thoughts and are prepared to suffer the severest hardships to see them materialize. If your wife, daughter and son have these qualities they can be the trustees, though they are related to you.

Now I have told you the whole truth and thank God He gave me the strength to do so. Without it I would not have been able to do my duty which, as a friend, I ought to do.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Lala Lajpat Rai—Ek Jeevani, p. 468

[1] From the postmark
[2] The English original is not traceable.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lajpat Rai", 30-4-1927.

290. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

May 2, 1927

YOUR WIRE. NANDI HAS SUITED BEYOND EXPECTATION. YESTERDAY'S EXAMINATION SHOWED NORMAL BLOOD-PRESSURE. TAKING TWO LONG WALKS DAILY GROWING STRONGER AND WRITING. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 5223. Courtesy: Mirabehn

291. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

NANDI HILLS,
May 2, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote to you a postcard[1] in Hindi just to tell you that I was thinking constantly of you and to see whether you could read and understand my Hindi. Do not be alarmed. I do not propose to write to you always in Hindi. But if you can follow my Hindi, I do want now and then to write my extra letters in Hindi, i.e., if you like the idea, not otherwise.

Now for your disturbing wire. I wonder what in my letters has prompted it. You can have no notion of the energy I have already regained. I have written for *Navajivan* four articles this week. For *Young India* I wrote three last week. I am really doing almost the normal work for the papers now. And I do a fair amount of love letters.

But all this is nothing compared to the result of medical examination yesterday. The pressure dropped from 188 to 155, and 155 to 160 is the normal for my age. I have been walking for the last three days over one mile per day in two periods each extending to 30 minutes. This is more than Amboli. So there is now no anxiety about my health. There can be no question now of leaving Nandi. It would be foolish to think of leaving it till my previous strength is attained, if it can be at all or till the season for Nandi ends which it does about July.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 30-4-1927.

I observe from your wire that in spite of your previous letter of attainment of peace, the pendulum has swung back and that you are again perturbed. This does not surprise me. If our lucid moments were lasting, nothing further will remain to be done. Unfortunately or fortunately, we have to pass through many an ebb and flow before we settle down to real peace.

I have therefore left you free to do as you please. Better certainly if you can keep your peace and stay. Equally certainly come away if you cannot keep your peace. Only, in any decision you come to, please eliminate the question of my health. For if you come, you would find little difference between me as you saw me in Kangri and me as I am now. Dive deep into yourself then and find out if you can where you are and act accordingly irrespective of what I would like you to do. Or put it another way. I would like you to do what your inner spirit tells you to do.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5224. Courtesy: Mirabehn

292. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NANDI DURG,
Silence Day, May 2, 1927

CHI. MANI,

Father writes to say that you look pulled down. How is it? Our body must be strong and radiant. An ideal virgin is expected to be at the top in every respect.

If you have not to go to Karachi, I would like to send you instead of Champavati to Delhi. There are many girls there and lots of work. And the climate of Delhi is excellent. I expect a wire from Karachi soon.

Let me know if any of the women in the Ashram are afraid of thieves.

Was Radha badly hurt? Did she have a fright?[1] I don't have the time now to write to her separately.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro: Manibehn Patelne, p. 56

[1] When the thieves came to her house

293. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Vaishakha Sud 2 [*May 3, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

I have now received plenty of hand-made paper. Even though the size of the paper is a little smaller than what you ask for, I believe you will prefer hand-made paper. Our chief duty today, of course, lies in regard to cloth; because from it our starving masses obtain their bread. There are not many who make this paper. Yet as long as we find something that is made in our country, and it is good, we must procure and use it.

It is very good that you have set apart some money for postage. It does not matter if the amount is small; but keep regular accounts so that those of you who can, may learn thereby how to keep accounts.

I find your progress in another direction also praiseworthy. Last week I raised the problem of protecting yourselves against thieves.[2] Do not lightly brush it aside. I wish you to falsify the epithets 'weak', 'timid' and so on that are specially used about women. They do not apply to all women of course. Who would say the women of *Raniparaj* are 'timid'? How can you call them weak? The women of the West, of course, take part these days in everything. I do not mean to say that they should be imitated; but at least they have been falsifying many of the assumptions of men. The Negro women of Africa are not at all 'timid'. Perhaps there is no such epithet in their language to be applied to them. In Burma, it is the men who appear timid and as it were the weaker sex. Women themselves carry on business of all kinds.

I raised the problem of thieves, not to frighten you, but to make you think calmly about it. In the Ashram we all wish to realize that we have a 'soul'. Now the soul is neither male nor female; neither young nor old. The scriptures as well as our own experience tell us that these are the attributes only of the body. The same soul pervades you and me. How then can I protect you? Is it not by learning the art of how to protect oneself? Only then can I teach you.

[1] Year is determined from the reference to the menace of thieves at the Ashram.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 26-4-1927.

There is enough for you to think over here. If I feel inclined, I will take up the subject once again.

If any of you wish to write to me, do so without hesitation. I learn that Valjibhai has frightened all of you. Do not get frightened.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3647

294. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Sud 3, May 4, 1927

CHI. MANI,

Tell Gangadevi that she should follow the doctor's instructions and take *moong* water if she likes. I cannot suggest any treatment unless I see her. Who is this new physician? Since when has he been visiting the Ashram?

Which of the sisters have volunteered for night patrol duty?

My health is improving. Write to me regularly. How do you do?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Vasumatibehn to write to me.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro: Manibehn Patelne, p. 57

295. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

May 4, 1927

I have been wanting to write to you for many days past, but I could do it only today. Hardly a day passes without your name coming up or without your being remembered.

You wanted me to stay at Panchgani, but it could not be done. It was essential for my work that I stayed in this province. I will certainly finish my work here when I get well, though I might have to revise my methods.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 88 & 90

296. *MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN*

In another column will be seen an extract from *Navajivan* of a most disgraceful case of calculated inhumanity of a medical man towards the dying wife of a member of the suppressed class in Kathiawar village. Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar who is responsible for giving the details of the case has withheld the names of the place and parties for fear of the poor suppressed class schoolmaster being further molested by the medical man. I wish, however, that the names will be disclosed. Time must come when the suppressed class people will have to be encouraged by us to dare to suffer further hardships and tyranny. Their sufferings are already too great for any further sufferings to be really felt. Public opinion cannot be roused over grievances that cannot be verified and traced to their sources. I do not know the rules of the Medical Council in Bombay. I know that in other places a medical practitioner, who refused to attend before his fees were paid, would be answerable to the Council and would be liable to have his name removed from the Council's list and be otherwise subject to disciplinary action. Fees are no doubt exactable; but proper attendance upon patients is the first duty of a medical practitioner. The real inhumanity, however, if the facts stated are true, consists in the practitioner refusing to enter the untouchable's quarters, refusing himself to see the patient, and refusing himself to apply the thermometer. And if the doctrine of untouchability can ever be applied in any circumstances, it is certainly applicable to this member of the profession which he has disgraced. But I am hoping that there is some exaggeration in the statement made by Sjt. Thakkar's correspondent and, if there is none, that the medical practitioner will himself come forth and make ample amends to the society which he has so outraged by his inhuman conduct.

Young India, 5-5-1927

297. *KHADI FOR UTKAL*

Three months ago Sjt. Shankerlal Banker and Lakshmidas Purushottam travelled in Orissa examining the khadi work going on in that land of paupers. And now Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj has also been touring in that province. Lakshmidas's notes have been published in *Navajivan*. Jamnalalji has sent the following summary[1] of his impressions which I commend to the workers in Utkal and all khadi lovers.

Young India, 5-5-1927

298. *TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA*

NANDI,
May 5, 1927

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

WISH YOU SUCCESS TERMS MY LAST LETTER. AM DAILY GETTING STRONG. BLOOD-PRESSURE NORMAL SINCE SUNDAY. NO CAUSE ANXIETY. GOD BLESS YOU.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7876. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Not reproduced here. It described the "semi-starved" condition of the people and recommended hand-spinning and hand-weaving to raise their economic, social and spiritual standards.

299. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

[*May 5, 1927*][1]

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I may be said to be out of the wood now, blood-pressure having become normal. I am taking fair walks morning and evening and doing a moderate amount of writing and reading.

But I see you are not yet free and Nikhil seems to be causing anxiety. May God bless the boy.

I am going to take all the rest that may be thought necessary.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1569

300. *TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM*

May 5, 1927

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

IN VIEW FREQUENT RAIDS ADVISE CANCELLATION VACATION LEAVE. ALL WHO CAN SHOULD REMAIN ASHRAM. IF NECESSARY WOMEN SHOULD BE ACCOMMODATED NIGHT CHHATRALAYA. SEND ME DAILY REPORTS. AM PERFECTLY WELL.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 11786

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's "blood-pressure having become normal"; *vide* the preceding item.

301. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
May 5, 1927

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

Yes, I am still bed-ridden, but now I can work more or less. I am of course thinking about [the work] there.

It seems advisable to have a committee appointed for khadi work in Kathiawar, constituted as below:

Devchandbhai—President

Harakhchand, Jaisukhlal—Secretaries

Fulchand, Manilal Kothari, Jivarambhai Kutchwada, Narandas and Ramdas.

I have acted on behalf of Narandasbhai without consulting anyone else. If you agree to this please dispose of the matter soon.

You are short of funds. But I have already written[1] asking for an amount to be sent to Fulchand if it can be arranged at the Ashram. But today I have a letter saying there are no more funds at the Ashram and so they can send you nothing. You may, if you can, have a loan from Vallabhbhai payable to holder, but only if you can return the amount. I might have managed it, if I were there. But now I am helpless.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5720

302. LETTER TO TARINI P. SINHA

NANDI HILLS,
May 6, 1927

MY DEAR TARINI,

I was delighted to have your letter. Yours has been a protracted illness. I hope, however, that you will soon regain your original vigour. You will not overtax yourself with your resumed studies.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1568

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 26-4-1927 and "Letter to Fulchand K. Shah", 27-4-1927.

303. LETTER TO HONORARY SECRETARY, AYURVEDIC CONFERENCE[1]

[Before *May 7, 1927*]

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to my sudden illness, I have not been able to reply earlier to your letter of the 17th ultimo. The remarks quoted by you and ascribed to me in the Minority Report[2], which of course I have not seen, are substantially correct but they have been torn from their context. In the speech, the report of which I have not read, from which I suppose the remarks quoted by you have been taken, I was drawing a distinction between Ayurveda and Ayurvedic physicians of today and I do hold the opinion that they do not do justice to the professsion they seek to represent. But these remarks should not be used in support of any proposition designed to prevent Government's assistance being given for Ayurveda research. I believe that Ayurveda is a field for much research work. For want of research scholars, unlike Western medicine, it has practically come to a standstill. Therefore, I should not discountenance aid being given to Ayurveda research under given circumstances and to honest and industrious men who love research work and who have the necessary qualifications. I should add that the remarks attributed to me were made at the ceremony of laying the foundation of an Ayurvedic College. Had I been averse to any aid being given to Ayurvedic work, I should certainly have declined to lay the foundation of an Ayurvedic College at Calcutta, to open the Tibbia College in Delhi and very recently, to open an Ayurvedic Hospital at Ahmednagar.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 7-5-1927

[1] In Ceylon
[2] Of the Commission on Ayurvedic medicine

304. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

May 7, 1927

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Thank God the tension is over.[1] It is a pleasure to write to you. You are going under the best of auspices. May your way be uniformly smooth and may God give you all the strength and wisdom you will need.

Here is Andrews's latest letter. If you care, I would like you to cable you will soon join him. Or on receiving a line from you, I would cable if you like.

The Viceroy's letter is very good indeed.

If you at all find the time, please ascend the hill once more.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri Papers (Correspondence No. 477). Courtesy: National Archives of India

305. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 7, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I had your sweet wire and your letter. Fall it was.[2] But I was not ruffled. I knew that you fell but to rise. When moments of exaltation become a permanent part of our lives, we need little further. Therefore I was not unprepared for the fall in the barometer. You will come when you must. Only you will do nothing without fullest deliberation.

I now walk almost my usual pace. The round I took four days ago has now been doubled. Progress is steady. You do not expect me each time now to say I am getting on. You will know when there is an interruption.

Pray never rely upon the newspapers. You get your information first hand.

[1] The reference is to Sastri's decision on going to South Africa.

[2] "In spite of the intellectual realization the heart had already failed me." (Mirabehn)

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5225. Courtesy: Mirabehn

306. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

NANDI HILLS,
Saturday [*May 7, 1927*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have both your letters. I can understand your grief at the death of Anil. But you should add to your spiritual strength as a result of this. Continuous grief wears out one's strength. One can add to one's strength by putting one's sorrows to good use, and it is best utilized by intensifying our desire to serve. It is therefore my constant prayer that one should devote every moment of one's life to service. One can practise it in two ways: first, by reading good books and meditating on them; secondly, by constantly engaging oneself in altruistic activities. As for asceticism, it is this that weakens our attachment to worldly objects and strengthens our love of things spiritual. One attains asceticism by reasoning, while one succeeds in practising it by persistent effort. For this very reason one may describe practice as sustained effort.

Nikhil still seems to have a weak heart; what, in the opinion of the doctors, is the reason for this?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1649

[1] From the reference to Nikhil's health; *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 5-5-1927.

307. *COW* v. *BUFFALO OR COW*-CUM-*BUFFALO?*[1]

A worker in the cause of cow-protection writes from Konkan:

> In your recent article[2] giving the conditions of cow-protection you said that the question of the protection of the cow should not be mixed up with that of the protection of the buffalo. At the back of this suggestion seems to be the fact that the buffalo bull is not useful for agricultural purposes. But in Konkan he is fairly useful. It is the buffalo bull which draws the municipal refuse carts, which works water pumps and even draws the plough, especially when there is a heavy downpour disabling the bullock and most of the agriculture in Konkan is being done under monsoon conditions. The buffalo bull has therefore his place in Konkan.
>
> The Konkan cow does not yield more than one pound of milk, whereas the buffalo yields 5 to 10 lb. It may be possible, after systematic breeding, to make the cow yield more and richer milk, but the buffalo needs no special culture at all. Does not therefore the buffalo in Konkan at any rate need as much protection as the cow? Please correct me if I am wrong.
>
> The buffalo, I admit, has no place on the ghats where the temperature is higher, fields are bigger and water scarce. He needs much water both to drink and bathe in. Konkan is the place for him.
>
> Your tannery and dairy are for cities. For the villages you must suggest some more practical ways and means. Let every village possess a stud-bull, maintain him partly from the common fund and partly from contributions from those who make use of him. This can be done everywhere and it will improve the stock. Could you not suggest similar other remedies?

These are appropriate questions. My article was not intended to throw the buffalo by the board, it suggested the stopping of buffalo-breeding in her own interest. In other words it meant freedom of the buffalo from its bondage. We have domesticated the cow for our own uses and therefore it has become part of our religion to protect her. It was my object to show that in trying to breed the buffalo, as we do the cow, we might lose both.

[1] The original Gujarati was published in *Navajivan*, 8-5-1927. This is a translation by Mahadev Desai.

[2] *Vide* "Conditions of Cow-protection", pp. 197-9.

The Konkan example does not affect my proposition. We must, of course, make use of the existing stock of buffaloes, and let it be done in parts like Konkan. But our duty is clear. We must not increase our responsibility by breeding the buffalo where we can do with the cow alone. We must therefore content ourselves with the use of cow's milk only. It should not be necessary in a city like Bombay to use buffalo's milk in preference to cow's milk. An endeavour should be organized on a large scale to cheapen the supply of pure cow's milk, and to improve the milk yield of the cow. It is possible too to make cow's milk richer. All these things have been developed into a science in Europe, especially in Denmark. Cows in those countries yield richer and more milk than our buffaloes. I have heard from *vaidyas* that buffalo's milk lacks and can never be made to have the hygenic and health-giving properties that cow's milk possesses. Pious people have told me that cow's milk is *sattvic* (possessing finer qualities) whereas buffalo's milk is *tamasic* (gross). I do not know how far this is true. I am trying to ascertain the truth through the proper channel. But it does seem to me, that all that the buffalo can give and even more, the cow also can or can be made to give. If this is true, why should man, having regard to his own needs, make himself responsible for breeding the buffalo? And having regard to the need of the buffalo, why should we needlessly keep her in bondage? Or to put it more simply, why should we press her into our service?

The fact that some people make a pecuniary gain out of buffalo-breeding can have no place in this religious discussion in which we have in view the good of all. In thinking solely of the narrow interest of the self or of the moment, we have ruined ourselves, i.e., our country and our religion. We can be a nation, only when we try to think in terms of the wider interests of the country. If we cannot even think in those terms, it is no use talking of religion. From the national point of view, the good of the country is the supreme consideration. From the religious point of view the good of all living beings from the cow down to the ant is the supreme consideration.[1]

Let the reader now turn to the table given elsewhere in this issue. The table relates to the income from and expenditure on the cattle maintained at the Satyagraha Ashram. The names are those of different cows. The manager in his covering letter says:

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Sitaram Purushottam Patwardhan", 30-4-1927.

> It is by no means the rule that the buffalo yields more than the cow. Some of the cows in the table yield a net profit, some just pay their way and some are boarders. These last we shall prevent from breeding and propose to take light work from them. A sterile cow has already been trained to do some work. The buffalo calves sell cheap, whereas some calves of the cow are worth Rs. 100 each. Two or three have taken the place of the horse with the result that we have dispensed with our horse-carriage.

The Ashram has decided to have no more buffaloes. We may not draw large deductions from the table, but it is certainly obvious that if the cow is fed properly she compares favourably with the buffalo in her yield, she does not cost more, and her calves are much more useful.

I propose to publish in *Navajivan* the results of the further experiments that are being conducted in the Ashram.

The Konkan friend is not right when he says that the dairy and the tannery are useful only in and for the city, and have no place in the villages. The cow has become a costly proposition even in the villages. It is as essential to keep proper accounts of her yield and to improve her stock and her milk in villages as in cities. And the skinning of dead cattle and the prompt and skilled treatment of the hides is more essential in villages than in cities, and that is the work to be done in tanneries.

It is a painful fact that in our present condition we have to cultivate the science of tanning in the cities and then take it to the villages. For one thing it is impossible to conduct big experiments in the villages, and cattle that are slaughtered in the cities come from the villages. If we can therefore conduct experiments in dairying and tanning from the religious and national point of view in the cities, we can easily give the benefit of them to the villages, and the cattle wealth of India which is at the present day being destroyed because of our ignorance will be saved, and man and animal will both be less unhappy than now.

Young India, 19-5-1927

308. *WHAT CAN PERSEVERANCE NOT ACHIEVE?*

In the West we sometimes see a man performing club-swinging continuously for twenty-four hours. These shows are held to demonstrate how far a man's endurance can go. Thousands of spectators give money and fill the theatres to see that. I have my own doubts whether these kinds of shows are of any use.

But readers will recall that something like this, though with a different, i. e., religious motive was organized in the Ashram during the National Week. Some youths insisted on plying the charkha continuously for twenty-four hours, forgoing their usual sleep. The letter written by the one who spun the largest quantity of yarn is interesting and, therefore, I give it below:[1]

Those who welcome any manifestation of enthusiasm by the young or have faith in the charkha *yajna* will feel happy to read this letter. Those students who happen to read this letter should learn a lesson from it. It is good to have interest in games, but it is better still to have the same interest in philanthropic work. They should also observe that such uninterrupted work is quite within the capacity of those who safeguard their health and observe *brahmacharya*. It is an abuse of one's education to use it for earning money. Education proves its worth when used for the service of others. Moreover, a student needs to have faith also. Reason will certainly help a little to understand that India's poverty can be banished through a simple thing like the charkha. But, in the end, it is only faith which will sustain the student's love of it. I realize every moment, from what I see of students, that without faith education is of little use.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-5-1927

[1] Not translated here

309. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised *Sunday* [*May 8, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you are getting all the letters I have been writing to you of late. Probably one letter every other day on an average.

I have your further letter. But I see it[2] will be some time before you regain your balance. I do not mind the ups and downs so long as you retain the elasticity. My own opinion is this: it will be perfectly natural for you to come to me wherever I am after finishing your allotted task, whenever that happens. An ordinary person may not give up a self-imposed programme. But if you become highly emotional and your nerves remain under tension, you should come even though your course may not be finished.

Naturally I am anxious for you to finish your course. I should not like to have to think that it was beyond you. But your health is more precious to me than your studies or any other preparation.

You must not think of coming to me for my health. For it is good and I cannot be looked after better even if you came. If I needed your nursing, I should wire for you. But such an event will not happen, if only because I have got into the habit of taking nursing from anybody and I train new nurses to my requirements. There are more nurses than I need here. So if you come in the hope of doing some personal service, you would feel idle and yawning.

Now for the necessity of personal touch. My own opinion is that it is necessary in the preliminary stages. And then the touch comes through joint work. You come in daily touch with me by doing my work as if it was your own. And this can, must and will outlast the existence of this physical body of mine. You are and will be in touch whether I am alive or dead. And that is what I want you to be. You have come to me not for me but for my ideals in so far as I live them. You now know how far I live the ideals I set forth. It is now for you to work out

[1] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira*

[2] The source has "you".

those ideals and practise them to greater perfection than has been given to me to do. He or she who does that will be my first heir and representative. I want you to be the first if only because you studied me from a distance and made your choice. And when in the course of the work, God brings us physically together, it is well, but it is well also when he keeps us apart in pursuance of the common object.

But this is counsel of perfection. Having listened to it and understood it, you are free to do as you choose. If you cannot contain yourself, you must come and not feel that I shall be displeased. I should be displeased if you did violence to yourself and became prostrate.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5226. Courtesy: Mirabehn

310. LETTER TO GANGARAM

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your letter too late to enable me to write to you so as to reach you. It was impossible for me to travel to Bombay because medical orders are peremptory—as peremptory as your own—and seeing that the medical orders were prior in point of time, they had to be obeyed.

I have really begun now to despair of your ever teaching me. You promised to turn my Ashram ground into a paradise if I sent you a map and all the details of past successes and failures. Well, I have given you all the information, I sent you my best man and the Ashram ground still awaits the magic touch. All the information about the poverty of the masses that you can give me can never be first hand because all you can tell me is stories of witnesses. You have not tasted the sweets of poverty. And, what is a millionaire, a successful engineer and a business man to teach one who knows the sweet, as well as the bitter, of poverty and who has come in direct touch with the masses about the latter's poverty? Thirdly—but I must not say anything about the third thing at the present moment.

Your connecting my bad health with a breach of promise which I never made to you or to anybody is in keeping with your

lavishness in promising a poor man like me all kinds of El Dorado. I am not aware of having made you any promise that I shall never take part in politics and what is more, I have not taken part in politics as yet. But I do promise that if favourable opportunity occurs, I should not hesitate to plunge into them. For the present I am content to sit at the wheel and sing the praises of God in that He gives me strength enough to perform that little bit of service to the masses of India in whose exploitation you are taking such a prominent part be it ever so unconsciously.

I do not expect any reply to this letter whilst you are in the West. When you do come to India I shall be glad to receive a further instalment of your promises with the certain knowledge that you will continue to break them as heretofore and like the wolf that swore at the lamb turn against me and accuse me of breaking promises never made by me. I shall take all such rebuke in good grace as in spite of your arrogation of universal knowledge, I have great regard for the qualities of your heart.

Yours sincerely,

SIR GANGARAM, KT., C.I.E., M.V.C.
CARE SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12577

311. LETTER TO REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 4th April last.

When the interim volume is published, I shall see that no efforts are made to obtain orders outside of India.

I am unable to tell you when the autobiography will be finished. I have to write from day to day. I have mapped out no fixed plan. I write every week as the past events develop in my mind on the day allotted for writing the weekly chapter. I am now dealing with events of 1903-4 and I have to cover the stormy period in South Africa extending to the middle of 1914 and the equally stormy 12 years of India. If therefore there is really any demand for these chapters in America or Europe, it will be advisable to publish them in volumes as they are

[1] Permanent address

being published here. If the MacMillan Company do not propose to publish the autobiography in instalments, it will be impossible to prevent sales outside India assuming of course that there is a natural as distinguished from stimulated desire in the West for reading these chapters.

Yours sincerely,

REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
12, PARK AVENUE AND 34TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 13971

312. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NANDI,
May 8, 1927

It is all to the good that you propose to do without him, provided it does not affect your health. Let us thank God for all this improvement. But do not hesitate to write to me when you need any help.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 91

313. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Monday [*May 9, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I had two letters again. How is it that letters bearing different dates are received the same day in different packets?

I have nothing more to say today. I am glad you have completely regained your balance.

My idea about the translation is that you should make it at first without reference to any other translation and then for your difficulties turn to the English version. It is right for you to be diffident but I have no misgivings and I do not want you to lose your originality by concurrent reference to any aid save that of a dictionary. Mark the passages you may not understand and refer to the other translations *subsequently* as I am doing with the *Gita.*

[1] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira*

What has brought Valunjker and Gangubai? Remember me to them. I am glad for your sake that they are there.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5227. Courtesy: Mirabehn

314. LETTER TO SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 10, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Shrimati Anasuyabai has sent me your letter herself and your joint letter to her, Gulzarilal[1] and Desai. I have read them both carefully. I had your own letter also. I could not reply to you earlier for want of your address.

As soon as I heard from Anasuyabai, I put myself in communication with Motilalji. I am daily expecting his reply. You shall know it as soon as I receive it. I thank you for the confidence you repose in me and it will be a joy to me if I can render any personal service to you; but I am afraid my longing and ability to render service have to stop there.

So far as our ideals are concerned, we stand apart.[2] Whilst Anasuyabai and Shankerlal Banker as also Gulzarilal and Desai are absolutely free agents, they have exercised their choice of accepting my guidance in framing their labour policy and administration. I must therefore shoulder my share of the responsibility for what is happening about labour in Ahmedabad. I have certainly advised them to keep Ahmedabad labour aloof from the other labour movements in India so long as Ahmedabad labour chooses to remain under their guidance. My reason is exceedingly simple. Labour in India is still extremely unorganized. The labourers have no mind of their own, when it comes to matters of national policy or even the general welfare of labour itself. Labourers in various parts of India have no social contact and no other mutual ties. It is provincial and even in the same city it is highly communal. It is not everywhere wisely guided. In many places it is

[1] Gulzarilal Nanda, sometime Home Minister, Government of India

[2] The addressee was of the opinion that the energies of all leaders should be harnessed towards an early inauguration of labour and industrial organizations all over the country.

under selfish and highly unscrupulous guidance. There is no absolute cohesion amongst provincial labour leaders, and there is little discipline among sub-leaders. The latter do not uniformly tender obedience to their provincial chiefs. Leaders in different provinces have no single policy to follow. In these circumstances, an all-India union can only exist on paper. I hold it to be suicidal therefore for Ahmedabad to think of belonging to it. My own conviction is that Ahmedabad is rendering a service to labour all over India by its abstention, or as I call it self-restraint. If it can succeed in perfecting its own organization, it is bound to serve as a model to the rest of India and its success is bound to prove highly infectious. But I am free to confess that there is as yet no assurance of success in the near future. The energy of the workers is sorely tried in combating disruptive forces that ever continue to crop up. There is the Hindu-Muslim tension; there is the question of touchables and untouchables in Hinduism, etc. Add to this extreme ignorance and selfishness among the labourers themselves. It is a marvel to me that labour in Ahmedabad has made the progress it has during the last 12 years of its corporate existence. If then Ahmedabad remains isolated it does so not selfishly, but for the sake of labour as a whole.

One word as to the policy. It is not anti-capitalistic. The idea is to take from capital labour's due share and no more, and this not by paralysing capital, but by reform among labourers from within and by their own self-consciousness; not again through the cleverness and manoeuvring of non-labour leaders, but by educating labour to evolve its own leadership and its own self-reliant, self-existing organization. Its direct aim is not in the least degree political. Its direct aim is internal reform and evolution of internal strength. The indirect result of this evolution, when, if ever it becomes complete, will naturally be tremendously political. I have not therefore the remotest idea of exploiting labour or organizing it for any direct political end. It will be of itself a political power of first-class importance when it becomes a self-existing unit. Labour, in my opinion, must not become a pawn in the hands of the politicians on the political chess-board. It must by its sheer strength dominate the chess-board. And that can only happen if I can retain the intelligent and voluntary co-operation of the workers in Ahmedabad and if our joint effort ultimately succeeds. This is my dream. I hug it because it gives me all the consolation I need; and the policy I have outlined, you will recognize, is a direct outcome of my implicit belief in and acceptance of non-violence. It may be all a delusion; but it is as much a

reality with me as life itself so long as I do not see it as delusion but see it as the only life-giving force. You will now see why I cannot, even if I had the power, respond to your appeal for dividing the funds collected by me in accordance with your suggestion. But I may tell you that I have not even the power. The funds have been collected purely for khadi work and it would be criminal misappropriation on my part to divert them to any other use.

This letter may not please you. I shall be sorry if it does not. But I regard you as a fellow-seeker after Truth and if my reading of you is correct, there is no reason why my having told you the whole truth and nothing but the truth should not please you immensely. It is not given to all of us to agree with one another on all our opinions; but it is given to every one of us to tender the same respect for the opinions and actions of our fellows as we expect for our own.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SAKLATVALA, ESQ.

From a photostat: S.N. 12491

315. LETTER TO ISABEL BAMLET

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 10, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

For me the problem of life is not quite so simple as it appears to you. I am sure you do not want me to enter into the reason for my conclusions. You believe in God's guidance and so do I. Let me walk as He may seem to me to guide me.

I may without using your name make the main contents of your letter as a text for an article[2] in the pages of *Young India* edited by me. I suppose you will have no objection.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

I. BAMLET, ESQ.
C/O IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 4443. Courtesy: Mrs. Carlisle Bamlet

[1] Permanent address
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 12-5-1927, sub-title, "Most Economical".

316. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NANDI DURG,
Silence Day, Vaishakha Sud 9 [May 10, 1927][1]

SISTERS,

What you say about thieves is correct. For the present, it is enough if you try to forget that you are "weak". You should on no account make the mistake of taking me to mean that men should give up their duty of protecting [women]. Because woman tries to come into her own, man should not think that she has already become capable of protecting herself; a man, who by thinking so, fails to protect women, is nothing but a shameless coward. He may be regarded as less than a man. Man has kept woman in subordination and in a state of dependence; so it is his duty to protect her. We are trying in the Ashram to make both men and women vigilant and self-reliant. But our goal is still far off. Till then my trying to awaken and put courage into your heart is one thing and men's duty towards you is another thing. So as long as there is one man alive in the Ashram, you should regard yourselves as fully protected.

There is no news of Surajbehn in your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3648

317. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
Vaishakha Sud 10 [May 11, 1927][2]

CHI. MANILAL AND CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter has not reached me but I have seen the one you wrote to Ramdas who perhaps forgot to send over the one to me.

I am glad that both of you are getting along well. I always wish you will help each other in your progress.

I am improving steadily. I have already written to you that I had a wire sent to you as you wished but your steamer had

[1] Year is fixed from the reference to thieves.

[2] Year inferred from contents

by then sailed. Verses from the *Gita* are being regularly sent to you. Please meditate on them as often as you can.

Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri will arrive there soon. Try to keep in touch with him as much as you can and render him any help he may want.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

It appears I shall have to be in these parts for two or three months more. If you propose to address a letter direct to me, send it to Bangalore. We will have to come down from these hills in the month of June.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1132. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

318. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

Wednesday, May 11, 1927

I have your letter. It is not satyagraha in the true sense of the word if people outside the State of Gondal agitate against the ban on entry of newspapers into the State. People not belonging to the Gondal State can offer satyagraha there only when the cause of Gondal subjects is common to all the States and if success in the Gondal case would mean an improvement in all the other States. Moreover offering satyagraha against a ban on entry of journals is like killing a buffalo for the sake of a thong or like citing scriptures for eating carrots while swallowing whole camels. Even if the satyagraha in Gondal is to be offered by the State subjects they ought to have a stronger reason.

The Wadhwan well case is slightly stronger no doubt, but before you take it up you should be prepared to bear the loss of the school. You should try some preliminary remedies, e.g., you should carry on negotiations, bring in the good offices of intermediaries, give the matter sufficient publicity. You ought to prove that the ban is due solely to ill will. In short, a satyagrahi's case has to be self-proven. If there is any scope for doubt, if the other party has anything to say, a satyagrahi should hold his patience for the nonce. If you look at all the occasions when I had offered satyagraha you will be able to see this condition as well as others.

You have rightly laid down the limit that satyagraha cannot be offered without my permission. Observe this limit steadfastly, and obtain my written approval before starting anything. This will

be good for you and the principle of satyagraha will not be compromised by your action.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

319. NOTES

EVILS OF MACHINE-MILLING

Mr. Andrews, who is working himself almost to death in the interest of the Indian settlers of South Africa, cannot forget things that he has at heart in India itself. Having read Mahadev Desai's account of the Bihar tour, he cabled some time ago:

> Tell Mahadev delighted accounts Bihar tour. Give love Rajendraprasad. Suggest your emphasizing hand-milling. Have witnessed evils rice mills, including destruction of vitamins. Warn public against unauthorized cables from South Africa.

The reader can see that the foregoing cablegram was sent in order that I may warn the public against accepting everything that comes from South Africa, unless it bears Andrews's own hallmark. But I hardly think that the caution is required. Naturally the public here will discount anything sensational that may come from South Africa, unless it is duly countersigned. But let us hope that the Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri will soon be on his way to South Africa, when all cause for alarm or anxiety will be set at rest. Without, therefore, dilating upon the South African part of the cable, I return to the rice mills, whose evils have distressed him so much as to prompt the cabling of his opinion. The reader will appreciate Andrews's anxiety when I inform him that he has to live whilst in India in the midst of rice mills. For whereas when he first went to Shantiniketan near Bolepur, there was no rice mill in Bolepur, at the present moment several such mills are working in that once quiet place. He often spoke to me about the din, the dust and the smoke and the fraudulent trafficking that has been going on in Bolepur since the advent of rice mills, and spoke also of the deprivation of a useful cottage industry by reason of the installation of these mills. There can be no doubt that hand-husked rice is infinitely superior to mill-husked rice. Medical men can, however, speak on the evil with greater authority than I can.

The moral evil of those mills stares one in the face, as soon as one goes to places where these mills have found a place. In spite, however, of my knowledge of the evil of this growing destruction of cottage industries, had I not been bed-ridden, I should not have undertaken the task that Andrews out of his good nature and out of the abundance of love that he has for India suggests that I should do. For I regard myself as an economical worker, fully cognizant of my own limitations. In trying to revive hand-spinning I feel that I am touching the root of the evil, that it is enough to occupy all my energy, and that if that movement becomes successful, as I am daily becoming more and more convinced that it will, the undoubted evils of rice mills, to which Andrews draws attention, and others which can be named will automatically disappear. Let us not make the mistake of thinking that what has happened in India about the spinning-wheel, and what is now happening about other cottage industries, such as hand-milling of rice, need cause no harm to national life, because such things have happened in the West without the West having come to grief. In the first place it is yet too early to say positively that the destruction of village life in the West has been either a benefit to it, or to mankind in general. In the second place, and this is more pertinent, assuming that the new life that has come into being in the West is calculated to benefit mankind, let us understand that whereas in the West the villagers whose industry was destroyed readily found another occupation, and were, therefore, somehow provided, with us only an infinitesimal portion of those whom the erection of these mills deprives of their occupation is otherwise provided, and that the vast majority are left idle and penniless. Let not the reader also rush to the conclusion that the hand-spinning movement is an indiscriminate onslaught upon machinery. This movement is intended to displace only such machinery worked by power as is harmful to the moral and material welfare of the starving millions. The fact is that we are too much obsessed by the glamour of the West, and the ready-made literature that is poured down upon us from week to week. We forget that what may be perfectly good for certain conditions in the West is not necessarily good for certain other, and often diametrically opposite, conditions in the East. Free Trade which may have been good enough for England would certainly have ruined Germany. Germany prospered, only because her thinkers, instead of slavishly following England, took note of the special conditions of their own land, and devised economics suited to them. And both England and Germany will have to revise their policy in economics immediately the nations that

are now being exploited by them come to their own, and refuse to be exploited. The civilization of both is based upon the exploitation of other lands. Let us remember that even if we have desire, we have not the power to exploit any single nation on earth. Hence if we are to live as an independent nation, we must evolve economics and conditions suited to our growth.

MOST ECONOMICAL

A friend, who fell ill about the same time as I became incapacitated, writing out of sympathy, and herself in search of it, says in her letter:

> I had time to philosophize and there was one thought I was working at ever since I lost my voice. And I have discovered that there is no necessity for living, and that Fate in giving us death early is most economical. For thereby she economizes the power that abides in us whereas we waste it by living when living becomes manifestly unnecessary. I spun the thought out until I felt exhausted, and I said to myself, "After all what is the good? The call somehow or other has not come. And so I must be wasted till there is nothing more left to be wasted."[1]

What a comforting thought it is to think of death, whenever it comes, as a wise plan in the economy of Nature? If we could realize this law of our being and be prepared for death as a welcome friend and deliverer, we should cease to engage in the frantic struggle for life. We shall cease to want to live at the cost of other lives and in contempt of all considerations of humanity. But to philosophize, as this friend has done, is one thing; to realize at the required moment the truth of the philosophy is totally another. Such realization is impossible without a due conception of the definite and grave limitations of the body and an abiding faith in God and His unchangeable Law of Karma.

Young India, 12-5-1927

320. YOUNG AT 75

An English friend writes:

> I want just to tell you of a letter and photographs I have had from a dear old Swiss peasant woman of over 70, who spins and weaves away up in the mountains above Villeneuve. She writes in answer to letters that she has had of mine, and then she says (in French dialect),

[1] For Gandhiji's reply; *vide* "Letter to Isabel Bamlet", 10-5-1927.

"We are commencing the winter and the snows are coming down to keep us company for many months. I shall have plenty of time to occupy myself with my loom. And I have now got an order for two pieces at 59 metres, so I shall need the time, as I get tired easily in these days" (at 75 years old!). Her life is a perfect example of the full, yet peaceful and contented existence, which should be the lot of all peasantry. In the summer she works in the fields, with just a few odd hours of spinning and weaving put in here and there when the days are wet, and in the winter when the land is under snow, she works away at her wheel and her loom all day. Take this hand industry away from her, and she would be lost in complete misery. As it is, she is the happiest and sweetest-natured person on the mountainside. Why? Because she alone, of all the peasants in that place, has retained the old industry, and she alone has a full and true life. I enclose you one of the little photographs which shows her sitting on a log of wood caressing one of her goats, which may give you some slight idea of her dear old face. The younger woman is her daughter-in-law.

I have the beautiful photograph which I am unable to reproduce in *Young India*, but the imaginative reader will have no difficulty in filling in the picture. The point of the letter however is that even in that machine-ridden country, there are people who find their true peace in this, at one time universal, home industry of the wheel and the loom. And if this old woman, who for her industry is young at 75, finds her solace, not her livelihood, in the wheel and the loom, how much greater is their need in this land where very few women reach the age of 75, where the majority needlessly *are* old at 50, and where millions of women need not merely the solace of an innocent cottage industry to occupy their idle hours but who need it even more to keep the wolf from the door?

'If that is so, why do not the millions take to the home industry, even as the dear old Swiss sister does, and find from it their solace and their food? What is there to prevent them from doing so?,' asks the ignorant scoffer. But somewhat similar was the question put by a burly, rough-looking Englishman to Surendranath Bannerjea in 1889 or 1890 when he was haranguing an English audience. This worthy member of the firm of John Bull and Company asked the then uncrowned king of Bengal, if what the latter said was true that India desired freedom, what prevented her from taking it, how was it that they, members of this numerous and powerful firm, never heard of breaking of window-panes, let alone heads, as they the members were wont to do when they could not get what they wanted? So far as my memory serves me

right, the papers recorded no answer from the orator. There was only a 'hear, hear' from the audience. But what the honest Englishman said to Surendranath may be safely repeated even today, and we know that such a question will be no answer to the cry for freedom. We may not know how to win it. Knowing the way we may not have the power or the will to adopt it. Nevertheless the cry for freedom is both just and natural. Be it ever so ineffective, it is the first step to freedom.

In the instance of the starving millions the scoffers forget in their ignorance that the millions have not even the wish to cry out for work or bread. Hence we join the English historian in calling them "dumb millions". We (including the scoffers) have to be their voice. We have to teach the dumb millions the first lesson. We, not *they*, are responsible for their awful poverty and ignorance. They don't know what they want or need. They are living corpses.

Who shall dare say to the untouchables that if they want their freedom, who prevents them from taking it? God is long-suffering and patient. He lets the tyrant dig his own grave, only issuing grave warnings at stated intervals.

We would say, and justly, that though the taunt of the Englishman could be theoretically justified, it would ill become Englishmen to beg the question in that manner, when anyone of us, though feeling helpless, is yet expressing the natural desire for freedom. So will it ill become us, middle-class men and women, to hurl the taunt put by me in the mouth of the imaginary scoffer in answer to the crying need of the millions—a need which they may not even feel but which a few of us feel for them. The way to answer the need is to multiply the number of such representatives who would not only be the mouth-piece of the dumb millions but would adopt corresponding measures by themselves taking up the wheel, by throwing away foreign fineries, by wearing khadi and by not resting till every idle hour of the nation is usefully occupied. Then, but not till then, shall India's women be young, happy and godfearing at 75, even as the Swiss sister of 75 is represented to be.

Young India, 12-5-1927

321. FOR SUBSCRIBERS, SOUTH INDIA FLOOD RELIEF

The following letter[1] was received by me last year, and has been lying with me ever since. One of the signatories Diwan Bahadur M. O. Parthasarathi Aiyengar unfortunately died sometime after signing the letter. The contents of the letter and the distinguished names[2] attached to it speak for themselves. I heartily endorse the appeal[3]. But before I can formally give effect to it, it is necessary to ascertain the wishes of the donors. In answer to the appeal issued in these columns and *Navajivan*, some sent their donations to the Satyagraha Ashram, some to the *Navajivan* office, and some to the office of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee. The funds were sent from time to time to Sjt. Rajagopalachari upon requisition. Audited accounts were published by him in the papers. The catastrophe was so sudden that it appealed to the imagination of the philanthropic public and a liberal response was made to the various appeals that were issued. The result was that practically everywhere there was a surplus. The agencies created were unable to spend the full amount with due regard to the proper discharge of their duties. As the signatories to the following letter inform me, the other agencies have disposed of the surplus in some beneficial manner or other. I have not been in a hurry to use up the surplus of the amounts received in answer to the appeal made in these columns. It is deposited in banks and is bearing interest. India is unfortunately a land of almost perpetual famines, and the chief activity of the All-India Spinners' Association at the present moment is directly to deal with such causes of famine as are within the power of man to control. Man cannot control and regulate floods beyond a certain limit. They will take their toll in spite of the exercise of all the ingenuity that man may be capable of. But floods always leave a legacy behind, which man can and is bound to deal with. In a similar manner man cannot bring water beyond a certain point when the rains fail. But man can produce conditions whereby people who are willing to work can find work enough to buy food with, when Nature

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] S. Srinivasa Iyengar; S. Ramanathan, Secretary, A.I.S.A., Tamilnad and Kerala; C. Rajagopalachari; K. Kelappan; M. O. Parthasarathi Aiyengar; M. Krishna Nair, M.L.C., Ex-Diwan of Travancore and T. Rangachariar

[3] To give the unspent balance of South India Flood Relief Fund for khadi work in South India through A.I.S.A.

leaves enough scope for transferring grain from one place to another. It is exactly these causes that the All-India Spinners' Association is endeavouring in a humble manner to deal with through its growing army of workers. The method adopted is to establish spinning centres in places where there is the greatest need for work during off-seasons. The largest amount of such work is being done, as is now well known, in South India. And the letter I have reproduced is a recommendation for the use of this surplus of the Flood Relief Fund through this agency. When I made an appeal for directing the funds for use in Orissa, no subscriber objected and several wrote to me approving of the suggestion. I now invite the subscribers, if they wish, to signify their own opinion. In the absence of any opinion to the contrary from them within a fortnight of the publication of this note, I propose to utilize the surplus in the manner suggested by the distinguished signatories. Needless to say I have consulted all my co-workers, and they approve of the suggestion.

Young India, 12-5-1927

322. THE SKELETONS OF ORISSA

According to my theory, if khadi work cannot be made a success in Utkal, it cannot be made a success anywhere. Yet, strange though it may appear, nowhere have the khadi workers experienced a greater difficulty in organizing hand-spinning than there. The eyes of the living skeletons of Utkal are unlit by a single ray of hope. What interest can the means of livelihood have for one who has despaired of life itself? Those who have taken to spinning in Utkal are men who still retain some hope of life. The khadi worker there has not yet been able to touch the vast majority who have lost all hope. The people are dying under our very eyes. We could see it clearly if only we had the eyes to see. We would then take up spinning for sacrifice and give away all our hoarded money for khadi work, or in case we had none, we would cut down our luxuries and superfluous expense and devote the savings to the same end.

It is only if we ourselves spin that we will be able to create the spinning atmosphere necessary to quicken these skeletons to life. But a spinning atmosphere by itself cannot do more than merely touch the fringe of the problem. Progress depends upon funds. No *yajna* can be complete without *dakshina*[1]. And it is clear

[1] Offering

to me as daylight that spinning is the one true *yajna* today and to contribute funds for its advancement is the only *dakshina*. For those who have not yet realized this simple truth, the following letter[1] will serve as an eye-opener.

Young India, 12-5-1927

323. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 12, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Again I have your two letters delivered the same day. I am so glad you seem to have settled down. But whenever you feel unsettled, you will not hesitate to tell me about it, as you now know from *experience* that I shall be patient. I am most anxious that you should not appear to be what you are not. I must take you as you are and help you to be what you should be. That I can only do if I give you no cause to fear me. That is why I told you once I wanted to be not merely in the place of father but mother also to you.

You will not leave the D.C. alone so long as he entertains your letter. Answer politely all his doubts and queries. Tell him if you know the difference between the Persian wheel which we have and the Ramachandra lift as also why spinning is not merely one of the industries but is the key industry of the nation.

There seems to be still some misunderstanding about my coming there. I am anxious to be there for two reasons. I want to see the place about which I have heard so much and I want to be with you. But the time I do not know. I am not likely to leave the South yet for four months, I fear. But it is no use forecasting events. I[t] should be enough for me to be able to say that I long to be there just as much as I long to be at Sabarmati. Please gently tell Krishnanandji this thing.[2]

Let Valunjker write to me. You should get hold of the correct spelling of his name. Let him write it [in] the Hindi character. Are they making a long stay there?

I am well.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5228. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] Not reproduced here. Written by Lakshmidas Purushottam, it was a similar appeal as that of Shankerlal Banker; *vide* "Khadi for Utkal", 5-5-1927.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 27-4-1927.

324. LETTER TO H. KALLENBACH

NANDI HILLS (NEAR BANGALORE),
May 13, 1927

LOWER HOUSE,

As I lie in bed and look up old undisposed of correspondence and revive old and sacred memories, I chance upon your letter of 27th February sent with Andrews's letter from your home at Inanda, and I revive so many pleasant and sacred memories. Every letter that you have written during the last two years—and you have not written many—has been a despondent letter, distrustful of yourself; but as long as I live I am not going to lose faith in you. I am hoping that some day as before you will have a fatigue of the exciting things that give you momentary pleasure and that you will at least come to India to meet an old friend and renew many old acquaintances. You have made a provisional promise to do so next September or October. Do come if you can and then stay as long as you like or as little as you like.

I am glad you are having short spells of Andrews's company. I have not come across a humbler or more godfearing man throughout my varied experience.

You don't want me to say anything about my illness; because I see you do get *Young India* and read it. I am at the present moment taking my cure in a little hill in the State of Mysore where an army of devoted volunteers and many of my closest co-workers are looking after me. Mrs. Gandhi and Devdas are with me. The names of others would mean nothing to you. So I do not give them. But when you do come, you will see them all and recognize them as having been with me on this hill.

This loss of strength came in the twinkling of an eye. Latterly I had put such terrific strain upon the brain that I was afraid of a crisis and it came just when I was arranging to have a lighter programme. But God seemed to say, 'I shall demolish your pride before you recognize your mad method and show you that you were utterly wrong in rushing as you have been doing, thinking that it was all well because it was for a good cause. You fool, you thought that you would work wonders. Have your lesson now and learn whilst there is yet time that God alone is to wonder-work and He uses whom He pleases as His instrument.' I am taking the chastisement I hope in due humi-

lity and if He raises me from this sick-bed, I am making Him promises that I shall reform my ways and shall seek still more strenuously to know His will and do it.

I hope you are keeping in touch with Manilal. He has got a girl with a strong character as his wife. She is the best girl I could possibly have found for him. Chance put her my way. She belongs to a godly family. Remember you are one of the trustees for Phœnix and I look to you to discharge your trust.

Sastri will be in South Africa probably within a month of your receipt of this. I have had long chats with him about you and your associations with Gokhale. Do try to be close to him and bring all our old companions in touch with him.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12350

325. LETTER TO P. J. REDDY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 13, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I did receive the cablegram from the Chinese Students' Association and whilst I was touring in Bihar. So far as I recollect, I sent them a letter also acknowledging the cablegram. What is however more to the purpose, I took immediate action by writing in *Young India.* And there was agitation against the despatch of Indian troops but as you are aware, we have no power.

I am now writing to the Association to the address sent by you.

Yours sincerely,

P. J. REDDY, ESQ.
HON. SECRETARY
HINDUSTHAN ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL EUROPE
KNESEBECKSTER 8-9
CHARLOTTENBURG 2
BERLIN

From a photostat: S.N. 12489

[1] Permanent address

326. LETTER TO CHINESE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 13, 1927

DEAR FRIENDS,

I understand from Sjt. Reddy that you did not know whether I received your cablegram sent by you some time ago, and whether I took any action upon it. You had given no address so far as I recollect in your cablegram; but I have a recollection that I sent you an acknowledgment to the place from which your cable was sent. What is more to the purpose, I took immediate action and wrote strongly in *Young India* which I had taken for granted you regularly read. There was persistent agitation against the despatch of Indian troops from almost all the Indian public bodies. But I am sorry to have to confess that Indian public opinion is not powerful enough to carry in such matters weight with the Government. It has to be recognized that we are after all a fallen nation struggling to rise and therefore beyond wishing nations like you all success in their endeavour to attain full freedom, we can do very little indeed to help.

Yours sincerely,

CHINESE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
BERLIN

From a photostat: S.N. 12498

327. LETTER TO H. CLAYTON

NANDI HILLS,
May 13, 1927

DEAR MR. CLAYTON,

Mr. A. V. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society has sent me a cutting from *The Times of India* of the 4th instant containing the report of a debate in the Corporation in which you are reported to have said in reference to Mr. Thakkar's investigation as follows:

[1] Permanent address

> Proceeding, the Commissioner said he was not going into the question of general administration. Mr. Horniman had referred to the investigations of Mr. Thakkar. Now, he (the speaker) had great admiration for Mr. Thakkar. During the last ten years every opportunity was given to that gentleman to make inquiries and once in conjunction with Mr. Gandhi. The result was that Mr. Gandhi reported that the class of witnesses was so unreliable that he could not believe one single allegation made by them!

I shall be glad if you will kindly tell me whether you are reported correctly, and I shall thank you if you will kindly let me have a copy of the report which I am said to have made. I do remember an interview or interviews with the late Mr. Turner in connection with the complaints of Bhangis. But I have no recollection of my having made either in conjunction with Mr. Thakkar or otherwise any enquiry of the type suggested in the paragraphs quoted above.

I must thank you for the kind enquiries that you made about me when Dr. Mehta visited me at Amboli. As you know I am now taking my rest at the above hill which is a higher elevation than Amboli, therefore cooler.

Yours sincerely,

H. CLAYTON, ESQ.
COMMISSIONER
MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12909

328. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

NANDI HILLS,
May 13, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your typed letter. Though typewritten letters are undoubtedly easier to read, I have still a weakness for handwritten letters. This however does not mean that I want you to write to me in your own hand. Your typewritten letters are quite as welcome as the handwritten ones and for the time being I have myself mostly to rely upon shorthand and the typewriter.

I have not yet got the book on vitamins. If you had given me the name of the book and the author, I would have tried to procure it in Bangalore which I am sure has very good bookshops.

I shall look forward to your manuscript on khadi. I won't discuss now the theory you have sketched in your letter.

Almonds I treated in two ways. I had them roasted and pounded through a nutmill into pulp and took this in the shape of butter. I had them also soaked overnight in water, the skin was removed and then it was pounded very fine, mixed with water and turned into milk. This milk was warmed and raised to boiling point and then eaten. Even this I could not digest. This was however now nearly eight or nine years ago—after the attack of dysentery. I have not dared to try the experiment again and after taking to goat's milk. But I should gladly make the experiment on my own responsibility if I had no other undertakings and should try it in spite of the other undertakings under skilled supervision.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

R. B. GREGG
KOTGARH

From a photostat: S.N. 14122

329. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Sud 12, May [13][1], *1927*

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. You both did well to volunteer your services for patrolling the Ashram at night. I wish you did it to the full extent of your physical capacity (even if as assistants to some other person). Fear is a mere figment of our imagination; there is nothing real about it. It vanishes as a result of facing it often enough and by the grace of God. When the thieves realize that even our paid watchman will not beat them up but would suffer beating at their hands and that the volunteers belong to a different class altogether and are ordinary householders, they will cease to trouble the Ashram folk. I am sure that someone of you will employ soul-force some day and win them over by love. But there is no doubt that this is like placing one's hand in a pit occupied by a snake. Someone will be beaten up or even killed. What man is there who is not afflicted by disease? Men, women and children, all fall a victim to it. How often was Radha knocked

[1] The source has "12".

down? What happened to Rukhi? How many girls were taken to the Hospital at Juhu? If we can stand it, why should we not also take a beating from thieves and others, with courage? This idea may be strange for those who expect to be protected by the police but not for us at the Ashram.

I received the slivers prepared by you just as I was spinning and tried them at once. The thread did not break even once, and today I have found out a way to determine the strength just by myself and no sliver has yet given me a thread comparable to that from you. I have come across no sliver better than yours. Equally good slivers might have come my way only once or twice before. But I do not think anybody can make better slivers than yours. Indeed after once having tried my hand at yours, it may be difficult to spin with any other. I wish and hope that you will be first in the first class in writing a good hand and in spinning as well as carding.

I had a letter from Karachi yesterday. Your appointment appears to have been delayed on account of Narandas's absence. So they have asked for a month's time. I wrote that if they really wanted you, I would wait for a month longer, but they should do nothing just by way of courtesy or just to get you there, i.e., merely to oblige us. I also asked for a reply by wire. I would like you to go only to a place where you are really wanted; only this would be seemly. We are in no hurry. Meanwhile you have to become perfect in every department of your studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 60-1

330. LETTER TO JETHALAL

NANDI DURG, MYSORE,
Vaishakha Sud 12 [May 13, 1927][1]

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I have your letter. If you persevere, you will succeed in your efforts. In this age such efforts do not bear quick fruit, but hereafter you must observe this one rule. Whatever the vow, once you take it, you must keep it. You may pile up all the barricades you need for safeguarding [your vow] and for protecting yourself [against breach]; one of the essential and fundamental safeguards is this. During the period of your vow, the two of you should live absolutely apart from each other and under no circumstances allow yourself any privacy. If you have neither the inclination nor the strength to keep a vow, you may not take it, but having taken once you must abide by the necessary conditions. You should go through Pandit Satavalekar's book on *brahmacharya*. His address is Oundh (District Satara). A copy of the book has already come to the Ashram, from where you can borrow it for reading.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1356

331. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

NANDI HILLS,
May 14, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I must dictate. Writing regularly with my own hand causes too much strain and it is not possible to sit up long. This, however, does not mean that I am not getting stronger, but the strength comes very slowly. And I do not want to be in arrears with such correspondence as I would like to attend to.

I prize your first letter as a gift. It shows you in all your greatness and goodness.

[1] Year inferred from the contents

You are living for your children. I envy them. But Krishna's[1] wedding must not be after Jawahar's type. It must be as humble as Sarup's[2]. Otherwise I must apply for a warrant of attachment. Or, if I feel I must enter into collusion with Krishna.

I read the public printed report from beginning to end. And I have now read the confidential report[3]. Both are worthy of Jawaharlal. I appreciate the view he presents about foreign propaganda. But somehow or other I still feel that our way lies differently. I feel that we will not get the support of Europe beyond a certain point, because after all most of the European States are partners in our exploitation, and if my proposition is correct, namely, that we must resist this exploitation in every shape and form, we shall not retain European sympathy during the final heat of the struggle. However, for the moment my view is merely academic. And you will vote Congress funds as you please.

The idea of Jawaharlal presiding has an irresistible appeal for me. But I wonder whether it would be proper in the present atmosphere to saddle the responsibility upon him. It seems to me to be a thankless task. All discipline has vanished. Communalism is at its height. Intrigue is triumphant everywhere. Good and true men are finding it difficult to hold on to their position in the Congress. Jawahar's time will be simply taken away in keeping the Congress house tolerably pure and he will simply sicken. Till your letter came, I had no thought of interfering this year in the choice of the President. My instinct still goes that way. But, being out of touch, I may be taking too gloomy a view of the situation. You know better. And seeing that you are taking your head, and I suppose heart also, to Bombay, you will know the situation at first hand and guide me. There will be still time enough to move.

I return Krishna's copy of Jawahar's confidential report as also the first page of his letter. I have only just received papers regarding Saklatvala which I shall go through in due time.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12576

[1] Krishna (Mrs. Hutheesing)

[2] Vijayalakshmi (Mrs. Pandit)

[3] About the doings of the "Oppressed Nations' Conference"

332. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

NANDI HILLS,
May 14, 1927

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I was looking forward to a copy of your address. I have now received the same with your covering letter for both of which I thank you.

Acharya Gidwani wrote to me preparing me for the receipt of your address. I had not read it but he told me that you had imputed to me a view of untouchability which I have never held or expressed. And, when he told me so, I wrote to him saying that if you had done any such thing, it would not surprise me as your philosophy admitted of any means for beating an opponent with. I have now read your address and I see that it confirms Acharya Gidwani's opinion. I suppose it is unnecessary to tell you that the view you ascribe to me is not mine. For, it is conceivable to me that you did not know my repeated declarations that I do not regard untouchability as is now practised as a part of Hindu religion, and that if I could persuade myself that it was, I should disown Hinduism. But this very palpable misrepresentation of my view does not affect our friendship. For, mistaken though I regard your philosophy to be, love of the country is good enough bond between you and me. Some day of course I expect to convert you [to] my view that it is a good policy even to treat an opponent fairly and justly. And my conversion of you will be my contribution to the *shuddhi* movement.

Of course you want to know my opinion about your address. I congratulate you upon your frankness and fearlessness; but the substance of your address makes no appeal to me. Your address is a powerful and eloquent plea on behalf of Islam not as its best exponents know it, but as you know it, and if I do not know better my own Hinduism, I do not know what I should do. You have also put yourself to immense pain in demonstrating that untouchability is an integral part of Hinduism, a view which I repudiate and have always repudiated *in toto*. Happily for me, my Hinduism does not bind me to every verse because it is written in Sanskrit, because it is supposed to be a part of some of our scriptures. If your portraiture of events is true and if your view of Hinduism is also true, the outlook is only gloomy both for

Hinduism and for the country. But let me tell you with all deference that in spite of your literal knowledge of the Shastras, yours is a distorted view of Hinduism. I claim in all humility to have lived Hinduism all my life. But I can't convert you by argument. And I know you will sweep me off my feet with a mere gesture if I endeavour to convert you by means of lathi blows. I shall therefore be content with what I know to be the Hindu way and wait patiently for my opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. S. MOONJE
NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 14613

333. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

May 14, 1927

You will deserve severe scolding if you are in a hurry to send back Pyarelal. . . .[1] You must not relieve Pyarelal just to indulge in your experiment of living unattended.

If you must write about tuberculosis in Gujarati, join a medical college when you are all right and acquire the knowledge without the desire for a degree. . . .[2] and do some original research.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 91 & 93

334. LETTER TO CHINAI

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Sud 13 [*May 14, 1927*][3]

BHAISHRI CHINAI,

I have your letter. Even before this I got the news from Bhai Kalyanji and Pragjibhai. Your letter however throws more light. I congratulate you on the fortitude you displayed in receiving the blows without either returning them or running away. I have no doubt that your action will bring benefit to you as

[1] & [2] As given in the source
[3] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

well as to the people. We should entertain no doubt about it just because we cannot ourselves see its good results.

I shall now answer your questions. It cannot be stated categorically whether or not one may participate in the activities of the Hindu [Maha]sabha. Those who are capable of having their own ideals implemented may surely do it, or those who are in agreement with the ideology of their local leaders will join them anyway. I find nothing wrong with the Hindu [Maha]sabha's aims and ideals. There can be nothing wrong in organizing a community. Abolition of untouchability is everyone's dharma.

Shuddhi is a very wide term. A part of what it connotes may be acceptable to us, some of it may be rejected. I think their manifesto gives no rigid definition of *shuddhi*. People therefore have to make their own individual choice after considering the activities carried on in their respective province or city. As a matter of fact you have therefore to act as directed by your own inner self in view of the local situation. There is no absolute dharma that you must attend all the meetings convened by the Mahasabha, nor are you bound by dharma to take active part in any meeting which you happen to attend. Dharma consists in undertaking an act only if it is likely to advance what one regards as one's dharma. I would have no objection to taking part in a procession launched by the Hindu [Maha]sabha if it is done with a pure motive and not expressly with the intention to create trouble. If we get news of a riot we should certainly exercise our strength, such as it is, in bringing about peace. It is everyone's dharma to make every pious effort to stop riots breaking out. I employ the adjective "pious" with a purpose because in this age of cowardice men are presumed to be observing their dharma of peace by remaining indifferent merely with a view to saving their own skin. Thus by pious efforts, I mean, no one is required to check the riots at the cost of his dharma. If there is an attack on my temple coming up and I just disappear or if I am advised to run away, neither I nor the person who counsels flight can be said to have been trying to stop the riot.

Social boycott can be justified in principle. I have however never seen a clear reason for a social boycott of Muslims; nor is a general social boycott possible, as far as I can see.

Please do write to me if you need further elucidation. I hope your pain has subsided; that Raiji too must be all right by now. One of your doubts remains to be cleared. There is absolutely no reason to believe that the Government has a hand in the functioning of the Hindu [Maha]sabha. The Govern-

ment, nonetheless, is wont to make use of every sabha or samiti with a view to consolidating their own position, as it does with the Hindu [Maha]sabha, the Muslim League and even the Congress.

Let Bhai Kalyanji and Bhai Pragji too read this letter so that I need not write to them separately.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2684

335. *LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI*

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Sud 13 [May 14, 1927]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

A long-awaited letter from you after many days. It is good that you visited the Kanya Gurukul. When you write to Champavatibehn, please ask her to keep me informed about the institution. I am pleased that none of your girls is scared of the thieves. I wish that we while at the Ashram do not live in fear.

If Surajbehn invites you to have a look at the Shravikashram at Palitana, do go and visit it when you get the time. I think, however, that you were absolutely correct in expressing your unwillingness to stay there. I would wish you to gain self-confidence and be better trained, and your convictions to be more firm before you decide to serve individually.

Surendraji's candour can never fail to have a good effect. Those of the girls who come to know him have improved, and I wish you to utilize his presence more. I regard Surendra as an unblemished *brahmachari*.

It is very good that you have taken Ramanama into your heart. This name alone averts all ills.

I am steadily improving. For the present I propose to make it a practice to dictate my letters instead of writing them myself because of the temptation to deal with too many letters and also to conserve my energy.

Ba sends her blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3135

336. CABLE TO LOUISE DIEL[1]

[On or after *May 14, 1927*]

TRUE ART CONSISTS MASSES LEARNING SELF-PURIFICATION SELF-RESTRAINT. MAY GERMAN MASSES COPY THIS ART OF LIFE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12500

337. APPEAL TO SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS[2]

The Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri has yielded to the pressure of friends in accepting the office of the first Ambassador for India in South Africa, at the sacrifice of his cherished wishes, solely with the object of serving you. It rests with you to make the best use of his services and his presence amongst you. You cannot do so unless you fulfil the following conditions:

1. You will not expect too much.
2. You will not try to seek relief in purely individual cases through him.
3. You will not swerve from truth in your dealings with him. To be false to him would be to be false to yourselves.
4. You will remain completely united.
5. You will put your own house in order and purify yourselves.

You will not assume that all your grievances will disappear with the coming of the Rt. Hon. Sastri as first Agent. He will have done enough if he succeeds in seeing that no new restrictive legislation is passed against you, that the operation of the old restrictive enactments is not made unnecessarily harsh and that the spirit of the new Agreement is carried out by the Union Government.

The Rt. Hon. Sastri is going there as the representative, not of individuals, but of India as a whole. He is going there to

[1] In reply to Louise Diel's cable received on May 14, 1927, which read: "We celebrate 60th birthday of Kaete Kollwritz, great German artist of masses. Please cable message to address."

[2] The Gujarati original, from which this was translated, was published in *Navajivan*, 15-5-1927.

uphold the prestige of India. Therefore you will not run to him for relief in every individual case. If you do, you will make the mistake of expending a pound for the matter of a penny.

Our strength depends solely on truth. No matter how you behave in your business dealings, you will never in the interests of the community think of swerving from the path of truth in your dealings with the Rt. Hon. Sastri. In attempting to deceive him you will be working your own ruin.

We here constantly receive reports of dissensions amongst you. If you go on creating different and conflicting interests, e.g., the rights of the rich as distinguished from those of the poor, the rights of the North Indians as distinguished from those of the South Indians, of the Colonial-born as distinguished from those of the merchants, of the latter from those of the indentured, of the Transvaal Indians as distinguished from those of the Cape Indians and Natal Indians, you will lose the little that you have gained. If you want to better the position of the whole community, you will always stand united.

We are ultimately to win by our own endeavour which does not mean sharp practice, but self-purification, which again means reform from within and purging ourselves of evil customs and superstitions, educating our children, and contributing money for education as well as other measures of social reform. In this work of self-purification, the Rt. Hon. Sastri's profound experience as an educationist and reformer should be very helpful, and the presence of Mrs. Sastri should be an inspiration to our women.

You will never get such another opportunity in the near future of ameliorating your condition. In my opinion it was impossible to find a worthier, abler and more impartial representative than the Rt. Hon. Sastri. Let us believe that the Hand of God has brought about this happy consummation. It rests with you entirely to benefit or not by the chance which God has in his mercy given you. May He show you the right path.

Young India, 19-5-1927

338. NOTE

RAMACHANDRA LIFT

The lift has now been in use in several parts of Gujarat since the management of it was taken over by the Satyagraha Ashram. With reference to one that was recently put up in Palanpur, Sheth Amritlal Raychand Jhaveri writes:[1]

I print the substance of the Gujarati letter received by me as preliminary evidence of the successful working of the lift, and in order to invite the opinion of others who have already got the Ramachandra lifts. I should not have concerned myself about it but for its very great humanitarian aspect. However, I am anxious to move cautiously. I have heard some criticism about the lift and I invite all the testimony for and against the lift. Up to now all the criticism that I have received has made no appeal to me; but if there is any criticism worth noticing I shall not hesitate to take the reader into confidence. I need not repeat that the spirit of this enterprise is not commercial in any sense of the term. Mr. Ramachandra Iyer has sold his patent rights for a royalty of Rs. 25 per lift up to 1,000. This was due to him as he has incurred considerable debts and as he must live. But beyond that, nothing but actual expenses are added in counting the cost. . . . Those who desire to see the lift at work may visit the Ashram for the purpose.[2]

Where the only object is absolute religious activity and pursuit of truth, there is no reason to hide anything. The object of the appreciation printed above is thus clear. If the lift has the merits described above then all must take advantage of it. We started with only one lift in the Satyagraha Ashram and have now provided four lifts. Out of these three are in working condition; but I do not consider this to be sufficient proof. If those who have bought the equipment are satisfied, and if they feel that because of this there is some saving of cattle as well as money, then nothing can be said against it. It can be said that experience gained so far is in favour of the Ramachandra lift.

Young India, 26-5-1927; also *Navajivan*, 15-5-1927

[1] The letter is not reproduced here.

[2] What follows is from *Navajivan*, 15-5-1927.

339. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

NANDI HILLS,
May 15, 1927

DEAR BROTHER,

I must dictate this letter. I forgot to mention one thing to you. I think I gave you the name of Umar Hajee Ahmed Jhaveri, one of the most truthful men I have met in my life. If he has thought ill of a person, I have known him to tell him so and apologize. He is the brother of the very first Indian merchant who went to South Africa, the late Abubakar Ahmed. Umar Hajee Ahmed has considerable property in Durban and has a plot of land with handsome buildings in a central place in Church Street, Pretoria. This property was the only property registered in the name of an Indian in the Transvaal. It became a point of honour with us to insist upon that property remaining in the ownership of Indians. Mr. Jhaveri was telling me that there was some dispute about it. I don't remember the exact circumstances in which the matter stands at present, though of course the past history I know well. This is a matter that might come before you. You will then recall the fact that I mentioned it to you. This is no individual matter but one of national concern. There is correspondence about this between General Smuts and myself. You will see all the papers if the case ever comes before you.

I saw Dr. Malan's cable. It was splendid. I am glad you are going so early as 8th June. Poor Andrews is being torn to pieces, and you will not reach South Africa a moment too soon.

The Natal Provincial Council's vote is indeed a bad beginning. But in the Cape Parliament the Natal vote counts for little. I have no doubt that you will have no difficulty with the Natal members some of whom are good, and all of them, unlike as in the Transvaal, the Orange and even the Cape, are proud of the British connection. But, probably, you already know all such things.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12351

340. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA RAO

NANDI HILLS,
May 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to my illness your letter has remained unanswered all this long time. Do you still desire to leave the Excise Department? And are you prepared to go to the Ashram and submit to its discipline without any pay? Though you do not know cooking, it will be necessary for you to take part in the kitchen work. What you do not know will be taught to you. If you are admitted you will be expected to learn Hindi. You will be expected to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning and from 4 o'clock till 7-30 in the evening you will be expected to take some part in the joint work at the Ashram. Of course necessary leisure for ablutions, etc., is provided. Thus you will see that before 8 o'clock in the evening you will have little time for doing private reading. There will be an hour's rest during the day; but after strenuous labour, you will hardly feel up to reading anything. Thus strictly speaking there is no such thing as 8 hours' day in the Ashram for volunteers who come under the Ashram discipline. You will be expected to retire to bed at 9 o'clock at night. In fact one motto at the Ashram is that work for the common good is prayer and work is devotion to God. If you feel that you can go through the Ashram discipline, please let me know and I shall forward your letter to the Manager of the Ashram with a recommendation to admit you. Whether you may be finally admitted or not will depend upon the Managing Committee who has full control over everything in the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

C. NARAYANA RAO, ESQ.
EXCISE DEPARTMENT
BEJJIPURAM
(BERHAMPORE P.O.)

From a photostat: S.N. 12564

341. *LETTER TO N. H. TELANG*

NANDI HILLS,
May 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to my sickness I have not been able to do anything further in connection with your letter. If you join the training class, your own expenses will be paid, provided, of course, that you enter into an agreement after the training is finished to serve the All-India Spinners' Association. If you show considerable aptitude, it is possible that you will get a pass certificate before the ordinary time and might then be admitted to the service at once. If you are prepared to take the training in the circumstances, I do not anticipate much difficulty about your admission.

Yours sincerely,

N. H. TELANG, ESQ.
TEACHER
A. V. SCHOOL
BALAPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 12567-A

342. *LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI*

NANDI HILLS, BANGALORE,
May 15, 1927

BHAI BENARSIDASJI,

I have your letter. Before I got it, I had no knowledge of all that had been written from the Ashram. You are no doubt aware that I am lying ill in bed. I can only guess why such a letter came to be written from the Ashram. Thus, as I have found Totaramji very systematic in all his work, this letter too must have been written at his instance. If this is true you have no reason to feel unhappy about it. As for me, I have full faith in your truthfulness. But when a particular job. . . .[1] a man should willingly act in conformity with the common rules.

[1] As in the source

Whatever the best man does. . .[1]

Again you may not be aware that a managing committee has now been formed in the Ashram and all business is transacted through it. And it has relieved me of all my responsibilities after I fell ill. Consequently it is implied that I should claim or exercise no prerogative. If I have not been able to satisfy you even after writing all this please write to me what else I should do.

What are you doing these days? What means have you adopted for earning your livelihood?

My health is now improving.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2576

343. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

NANDI HILLS,
May 16, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. You may be declared to be a discharged patient now I suppose and so I have eased down a bit in my sending you love letters.

I am making steady progress. Bangalore doctors came today and they found the blood-pressure to be only 150 and the general condition quite good. They now want me to eat more. I shall see what is possible in that direction. I have been obliged to omit bread and vegetable because I thought them to be too heavy. I must now make another attempt. But there is no doubt about my getting better.

I see you are making headway with your work. How many women are there and how many girls? How many men and how many boys? Give me, when you can, a general idea of the Ashram and its inmates.

I do not know if anybody has told you that at Sabarmati of late we have been having much too much attention from thieves. Once our watchman suffered bad injuries in a scuffle with them. That woke me to a sense of our duty. And I thought that this work of guarding was as much *our* duty as a common kitchen.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 21; the whole verse reads: "Whatever the best man does is also done by other men; what example he sets, the world follows."

I therefore suggested that we must become our own watchmen and watchwomen and that we should seek not to beat the thieves out of the Ashram, but try to wean them from their error if they could be got at and that we should risk being beaten by them. The suggestion has been adopted and there are now over thirty volunteers including five women. This is a good beginning.

The common kitchen is daily improving. Shankaran has proved an ideal chief and *chef*. There are over twenty dining at thek itchen. All this will delight your heart when you return.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5229. Courtesy: Mirabehn

344. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Vaishakha Sud Purnima [May 16, 1927][1]

SISTERS,

I am very glad to know that you are not afraid. A person who knows that God is the Protector of all, why need he fear? By saying that God is the Protector of all, I do not mean that none would be able to rob or harm us. If this happens, it is not a reflection on the capacity of God to protect us; it is an indication of our lack of faith in Him. The river is ever ready to give water to all. But if one does not approach it with a pot in which to fetch water, or avoids it thinking its water poisonous, how can that be the fault of the river? Fear is a sign of lack of faith. But faith cannot be developed by means of reasoning. It comes gradually through reflection, meditation and practice. To develop such faith, we pray to God, recite *bhajans*, read good books, seek the company of the good and take to sacrificial spinning at the wheel. He who has no faith will not even touch the spinning-wheel.

I am getting better.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I did not notice all this space on the rear side. We know we are all poor, so how can I now throw away this space?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3649

[1] Year is fixed from the reference to the scare from robbers at the Ashram.

345. LETTER TO TARA MODI

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Sud 15 [May 16, 1927]

CHI. TARA,

I do get news about your health. How did your health give way? Why should you get hysteria? Write me a detailed letter if you have the strength. If you have to fast, I am not going to worry at all because I am more and more convinced that when no other medicine works, fasting is a sure remedy. Fasting does no harm, but don't try it if you don't have the courage.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1697. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

346. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA[1]

NANDI DURG,
Vaisakha 15 [May 16, 1927]

DEAR SISTER,

You have not recovered as yet. How is it? Quite some time has gone by. Do you not wish even to change the treatment? Totaram should write to me all the details. You need not bother to write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2548

[1] Wife of Totaram Sanadhya, a Fiji-returned immigrant, an inmate of the Sabarmati Ashram

347. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NANDI HILLS,
May 17, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

When my illness is fast becoming a thing of the past, yours seems to be obstinate. Whilst it remains so, you must not stir out. But why does it persist like that? Are you undergoing any treatment there? What exactly is the food you are taking? I ask this question as Mr. Gregg has sent me a book containing the latest researches on food and its relation to health. One thing does appear to me, however, apart from the book. May it be that your vegetarian food does not agree with your body that has been built up upon flesh foods? While the change may not have done any visible harm, may it have undermined the constitution or may it be that the change of diet does not serve for rebuilding a shattered constitution? So it happened in my case. I went on famously on fruits and nuts alone for more than six years. But after that severe attack of dysentery I could not rebuild the body without milk to which in some shape or other the constitution was used up to 45 years or rather 40 years. You know my rigid predilection, bordering on fanaticism, for vegetarianism. But my fanaticism exhausts itself with my own person for the simple reason that it is a matter of lifelong habit and of deep religious conviction. But religious conviction is a matter personal to every individual. Therefore, even being a vegetarian, I never enforce my conviction on friends but leave them free to do as they choose, even when they are under my influence, as I did for instance for Prabhudas, Chhaganlal's son. I had an English friend living with me in Durban. He had become a vegetarian under my influence. After some time he became ill. I could see that he could not get on well without his usual diet. I begged of him to procure meat from outside and become well. I could not introduce it in my own home. I want you to seriously consider the question therefore. You have to think not only of yourself but of Nikhil also and even Hemprabha Devi if she is still as bad as you are and Tarini if he is a vegetarian. If you are eating pulses, they are of course a fatal thing for weak persons and those with sedentary habits. You saw with what agitation Andrews cabled to me all the way from South Africa about milled rice. And

my concern about your food became enhanced upon reading the book sent by Mr. Gregg.

If there is any particular book on Buddhism that you require please tell me and I shall try to procure it.

The paragraph about yoga in *Navajivan* was unfortunate. I did think of yoga practices, but only from two sides, their reputed helpfulness in restoring health and in aiding *brahmacharya*, the latter for the sake of helping the student world whose mind is cut up to pieces under dissipating practices, and the former with reference to my own health. Having read a book on *brahmacharya*, during my illness and having heard copious references to use of *asanas* I began further research. I do not hope to get much help for acquiring greater purity. Not that I do not need all that I can get, but I do not feel that I shall get it through these practices. One who considers himself proficient in yoga told me that in their final stages Raja Yoga, Hatha Yoga and Karma Yoga were one and the same and that it was only in the final stage that conquest of passions in every shape and form was at all possible; and that in Hatha Yoga the final stage was difficult of attainment and required extensive practice. I was not surprised to hear this. For, I knew it before I was so authoritatively told. For that conquest therefore I have only to continue along the path I have so long followed. But I am taking gentle exercise by way of some of these *asanas* and am eager to take more as I become stronger. You need not therefore think any more about the yoga practices. Some day in order to remove expectations and misunderstandings, I propose to write about this thing in the pages of *Young India*. If I make any discovery about the simple use of *asanas* for regaining health, I shall certainly write to you.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1570

348. LETTER TO MULCHAND AGRAWAL

NANDI DURG,
Vaisakha Krishna 2 [May 18, 1927]

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I have your letter. You have started khadi work, for which I thank you. Nowadays owing to my illness, Jamnalalji is handling the work of the Charkha Sangh. I shall pass your letter to him. He is due here in a day or two.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 761

349. NAGPUR SATYAGRAHA

I see an Associated Press telegram in the papers, in which Mr. Manchershah Awari is reported to have said, that he had my consent and full sympathy for his movement of civil disobedience with regard to the Arms Act and the Explosive Substances Act, designed for the release of the Bengal detenus.

If my recollection is correct, either the Associated Press representative has misunderstood Mr. Awari, or the latter has misunderstood me. I have no recollection of having given my consent in advance to Mr. Awari's proposed launching out on civil disobedience in any connection whatsoever. It is really contrary to my practice to give such consent in advance. I did discuss the theory of civil disobedience with Mr. Awari, for whose patriotic spirit and self-sacrifice I have great regard. I drew his attention to the grave limitations of civil disobedience. He spoke, and rightly, with great warmth and concern about the Bengal detenus, and I remember having said, that if some movement in the shape of civil disobedience could be conceived and successfully launched, it would be a great thing. I hold that view even at the present moment. For I regard the indefinite detention of the Bengal patriots without any trial of any sort as a grave injustice. And if I have remained dumb, it is not because I do not feel the wrong as keenly as the closest friends of the detenus, but because I do not desire to make a fruitless exhibition of my powerlessness. A

public worker has to learn to endure with fortitude what he cannot cure. And bed-ridden though I am, if I could think of any feasible civil plan for securing the release of these prisoners, I should embark upon it without the slightest hesitation. But I confess that I have none in view. My own personal opinion is that there is no atmosphere in the country for civil disobedience. We have fallen upon evil times. The atmosphere today is one not of non-violent disobedience but of very violent and suicidal disobedience.

I have no knowledge whatsoever of what is being done in Nagpur. I can pronounce no judgement upon Mr. Awari's movement. I have given no consent for the movement. I had intended to say not one word about the movement, and it would have been well if Mr. Awari had not dragged in my name. If he thought that his movement had my consent, he should have laid the whole of his plan in a concrete form before me and secured it in writing. If I had approved of it and if I could not have taken an active part myself, I would at least have backed it with all the force at my command through these columns. He must now thank himself if my disclaimer harms his movement in any way.

And let it be a warning in future to everyone concerned against using my name in connection with any movement without my previous consent in writing. Indeed it is necessary for workers to become self-reliant and dare to prosecute their plans if they so desire without hankering after the backing of names of persons supposed to be great and influential. Let them rely upon the strength of their own conviction and the cause they seek to espouse. Mistakes there will be. Suffering even avoidable there must be. But nations are not easily made. There will have to be rigid and iron discipline before we achieve anything great and enduring, and that discipline will not come by mere academic argument and appeal to reason and logic. Discipline is learnt in the school of adversity. And when zealous young men will train themselves to responsible work without any shield, they will learn what responsibility and discipline are. And out of this army of candidate leaders, will arise one real leader, who will not have to plead for obedience and discipline but who will command it as a matter of course, because he will have been tried in many a skirmish and will have proved his right to undisputed leadership.

Young India, 19-5-1927

350. HORRIBLE PRACTICES

Mr. Andrews in the course of a letter from Durban says:[1]

I know the temple at Umbilo, which may really be called a suburb of Durban. Even years ago, when the temple was erected, I had my misgivings. Bitter experience has taught me that all temples are not houses of God. They can be habitations of the devil. These places of worship have no value unless the keeper is a good man of God. Temples, mosques, churches are what man makes them to be. I am therefore not surprised at the painful and horribly superstitious practices going on in this so-called temple. The origin of these practices is easy enough to trace. There are three classes of Indians in South Africa. The free Indian trader has nothing to do with these practices. Nor have the large number of Colonial-born Indians who have received in the face of terrible odds a tolerably liberal education. The third class is the indentured Indian, now become free. He is drawn naturally from the poorest class here. Nothing has ever been done by the Government or the employers or by the free Indian community to help these unfortunate men and women out of their ignorance and superstition. The result is that they are preyed upon by superstitious and even evil-minded men who pose as priests and holy men. They mutter a few Sanskrit verses whose meaning they do not know and which they horribly mispronounce, and resort to all kinds of awe-inspiring practices. And what can be better than a temple, where simple people congregate and where every kind of superstition derives a halo from associations attributed to temples? I think that the common law of South Africa is wide enough to deal with these practices if the Government desires to put them down.

The fact is, unfortunately, that the prejudice against Indians in South Africa is not ascribable to these practices, nor is it directed against the men who are victims of this barbarism. It is directed chiefly against the free trading class who have nothing to do with these practices. And therefore these practices have gone without any notice or comment. And if they are now being noticed, it is in order to prejudice the European mind againss

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had referred to the evil practices of self-torture like "fire-walking" festivals by Indians at Umbilo temple and to a page of pictures of such things in *The Natal Advertiser*.

the Habibullah Agreement and against what little relief is sought to be given by it to the Indian settlers. It should also be borne in mind that these practices are by no means common amongst Indians throughout South Africa. They are confined only to the part of the coast of Natal where indentured Indians are to be found in their largest numbers. If therefore the Government intend to put these practices down, they can do so under the common law with ease, and they can be dealt with also through municipal bye-laws. I am sure, that if action is taken, not a voice will be raised against it in the name of religion falsely so called for sheltering these practices. No cultured Indian will have anything to do with them, and the ignorant people who witness these tortures with awe will not dare to defend them in a court of law. What we can do here is to encourage cultured Indians in South Africa to fight the superstition. They should, without seeking Government intervention, work in the midst of the poor people, and wean them from these barbarisms, and advise them to help the Government, if they choose to prosecute those who take part in those practices, thus showing their desire not to reproduce in South Africa all that is bad in our life, but to reproduce only that which is good in our civilization. It is our duty to advise and encourage our countrymen in South Africa to do nothing that will give a handle to the agitation against them.

Young India, 19-5-1927

351. LETTER TO SATCOWRIPATI RAY

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 19, 1927

DEAR SATCOWRI BABU,

I got your letter day before yesterday after that day's mail was closed. I could not possibly over-take your letter yesterday.

You have my deepest sympathy with you in your troubles. But I have much fear it is out of my power to help you in the direction desired by you. All the same please let me have a full description of your property, where it is situated, what is its extent, whether there are any buildings on it and if there are, their dimensions. Possession of this information will be useful for me. But your case is not out of the ordinary. I know many who are passing through the same difficulty. It is also one of the things we have to go through in our march towards our goal.

And I want you to bear your troubles with philosophic calmness as I know you will do.

But why do you say insolvency is not to be thought of? Honest insolvency is no crime if a borrower [borrows] in good faith for investing in a prosperous enterprise. Suppose that through no fault of my own the enterprise fails and the loaner knew that I had no other means of repayment. Surely if he is impatient, insolvency is the only honourable course left open for me even if I desired as I should to repay the loan in spite of insolvency. For, insolvency would be the only way of my doing further business. As a lawyer you know the genesis of insolvency law. It was created to protect honest but unlucky enterprise and to encourage trade and enterprise. No doubt the golden rule is not to borrow. But so few of us follow the golden rule. The next best therefore is not to accept a defeat but to seek the protection of the insolvency court and open a new leaf, and if successful, in the next enterprise, repay of one's own free will the original loaner. There are such celebrated instances of men having deliberately become insolvent and then repaid their creditors. In my own practice, I advised one of my nearest clients[1], who because he had taken part in the satyagraha movement, was forced into the insolvency court. I called a meeting of the debtors. They were unbending. I challenged them to do their worst. The consequence was insolvency. But after the insolvency, the client paid the creditors in full to their agreeable astonishment. They apologized and they showed their sincerity by giving him afterwards unlimited credit which they had no occasion to regret. I therefore strongly advise you to meet the creditors, place the position frankly and fearlessly before them and tell them that you will repay if you earned. If they don't listen, let them make you insolvent, or if the insolvency law here admits of voluntary surrender you may even surrender voluntarily. Then you will have breathing time and then if you do not want to resume practice, you will join the Khadi Service. Khadi Service will never give you Rs. 25,000. But if the movement goes forward with a leap, khadi will become a commercial proposition, and when it does become that, there will be a moderate amount of money in it also. This may seem to be all far-fetched; not so to me. I regard khadi as a far sounder proposition even from a commercial standpoint than the least that can be made by our merchant princes. After all sound commerce is of slow growth. But my confidence in khadi is such

[1] A. M. Kachhalia; *vide* Vol. IX, p. 157.

that, though it is of slow growth, in the long run, it will prove to be the shortest route to healthy commercial prosperity of individuals as it certainly will be of the nation.

I do not want you [to] succumb therefore under the influence of false pride or [a] false sense of honour. I want you to be a pattern for others, and therefore please follow my advice and get rid of the burden which is evidently bearing you down. Then make a firm resolution not to borrow a single farthing henceforth. Public workers must not borrow. And insist upon your numerous family dependants to work for their livelihood and let them all work for khadi, and if they don't want to do that, the male members may make their own choice; females may grumble but will submit to the inevitable. This regulation of family obligations is also a necessary corollary to national uplift. We must break through this family crust if we are to grow to our national height. These falsely assumed obligations I know are hampering the progress of individuals and the nation in a way very few things are doing. It is wrong, I almost want to say immoral, to support men and women who have some capacity for work. Even a rich nation, if it made[1] an attempt to support one half of its members without taking any work from them, it will go to the dogs. But we are doing infinitely worse and still expect to become a strong, self-reliant and self-respecting nation; it is an impossible proposition.

Do let me know your final decision and do not hesitate to write to me as often as you like. It will be a terrible thing if you are lost to public work.

Yours sincerely,

SATCOWRIPATI RAY, ESQ.
27, KALIDAS PATITUNDU LANE
KALIGHAT
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 12579

[1] The source has "Even rich nations if they made".

352. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA AIYENGAR

NANDI HILLS,
May 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I must dictate in order to conserve my energy.

I appreciate your considerate telegram[1]. I haven't enthused over it because of the wretched atmosphere about us. Our best resolutions come to naught because we seem to have lost the power of taking the people with us. Of what use will be our resolutions if the people continue savagely to break one another's heads? But I have said of you that where others have failed, you may owing to your invincible faith succeed. I wish therefore all strength to your elbow and shall rejoice if you succeed in putting an end to this disgraceful civil war and make men out of beasts that we have become at present.

I am making steady progress and trying to follow your movements as carefully as I can.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SRINIVASA AIYENGAR
MYLAPORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14124

353. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 3 [*May 19, 1927*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You write it would be better if Manibehn stayed [at the Ashram] instead of going over to Karachi. God alone knows whether or not she would have the opportunity to go. But if she is not to go there, still she has to be sent out somewhere because I wonder if she has yet developed any attachment to the Ashram. The girl is extremely candid and honest; so wherever

[1] Reporting a unanimous resolution on Hindu-Muslim question by the A.I.C.C. on May 15 and 16 at Bombay

[2] Year inferred from contents

she is, she is sure to do the work, but it is for you all to create in her affection and interest. Do keep her there if you can. And if this is possible [for the time being], I need not arrange to send her elsewhere. I would let the [chance] at Karachi materialize if it is to happen. But she can also be called back from there after a short period. I am [glad] that the [Ashram] women have [taken up] the mess. Please congratulate them all and tell them that they must fulfil with credit what they have undertaken.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9187. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

354. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 3 [May 19, 1927][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

Your letter. It has always been my view that we should on no account bring in the British Government to mediate in the affairs of the native States. But we cannot say that this principle is to be followed on every occasion, because as I expect a man who would neither ask for nor want the mediation of the British to possess the strength to resist oppression peacefully or otherwise or acquire the capacity to suffer it silently. But a man who is unable to fight, who cannot put up with oppression and either enlists the aid of the British or loses his manhood by abject submission to oppression should certainly seek the help of the British.

According to my concept of the Kathiawar Political Conference, there is no question of seeking British help; and hence if it works in accordance with my idea, it would consist of only the simple unsophisticated people offering non-co-operation and satyagraha and wearing only khadi.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2854. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

[1] Year inferred from contents
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Fulchand K. Shah", 11-5-1927.

355. LETTER TO SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is an extract from Pandit Motilalji's letter in answer to mine. Please tell me what you would have me to do further in the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure 1

SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA, M.P.
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON S.W. I

From a photostat: S.N. 12504

356. A LETTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Besides the writings mentioned by you, there is a monograph by the late Rev. Joseph Doke, also by Dr. P. J. Mehta, and by H. S. L. Polak besides other writings collected by G. A. Natesan and copies of *Young India* since 1922, and my booklet called *Indian Home Rule*[2]. Most of these publications I think can be secured from G. A. Natesan of the *Indian Review*, Madras. *Young India* is edited by me and is published at Ahmedabad. *Ethical Religion*[3] is not an original book. It is a translation of an adaptation in Gujarati of an American publication called *Ethics of Religion* by Salter which I read years ago. In its translated form I have not read it. It will be therefore risky to derive a knowledge of my belief through that book. If you desire any further information, you will [not] hesitate, please ask for it.

[1] Permanent address
[2] *Vide* Vol. X, pp. 6-68.
[3] *Vide* Vol. VI.

I thank you for your enquiry about my health which is steadily improving.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14125

357. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 4 [*May 20, 1927*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter. Even if you have nothing to write, you will not be excused from writing once a week. At least I can certainly hope to see the improvement in your handwriting. And if you find nothing to write, just say what you did on that day (or on the previous day).

Blessings from
BAPU

VASUMATI DHIMATRAM NAVALRAM PANDIT
KELAPITH

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 474. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

358. LETTER TO GEORGES MIGNON

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

You may publish in your magazine the chapters of my writings called "My Experiments with Truth". Their rights of publication in book form in French have already been given to M. Emil Roniger. You will please therefore confine your translation to its publication in your magazine. I take it you will kindly send me copies of your magazine that may contain the translation from time to time.

Yours sincerely,

M. GEORGES MIGNON
EDITOR OF "EXTREME-ASIE"
SAIGON

From a photostat: S.N. 12505

[1] Permanent address

359. *LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI*

NANDI HILLS,
May 21, 1927

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I was grieved to hear of your illness. I hope you will soon recover. Why not come here to regain your strength? The climate here as you know is very nice.

Somehow or other the resolution[1] of the A.I.C.C. does not fill me with immediate hope, much less, enthusiasm. The hope deep down which is born of implicit faith is there. But it receives no added impulse from the resolution. For, I feel the few who have a detached mind and who are keeping their heads cool, can produce at present no impression upon those who are fighting or those who are at the back of the fighters. I don't know if you think that you have any influence. I see nothing but devilry going on under the garb of religion. Not until we learn to become men and therefore instead of breaking heads for the vindication of supposed rights, we learn to refer to arbitration matters even of attacks upon our rights supposed or real and until we cease to think of Government interference, shall we have real peace or real swaraj. Anything short of that gives me no satisfaction. My only hope therefore lies in prayer and answer to prayer.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI
1, DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14126

[1] On Hindu-Muslim unity; *vide* "Letter to S. Srinivasa Aiyengar", 19-5-1927.

360. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NANDI DURG,
May 21, 1927

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter.

You have surely heard the song with this first line "Never give up, even if you lose your life". That is to say, we may lose our life but never lose heart. And where is the sense in admitting defeat as regards spinning, for instance, and writing a good hand, especially when I am by your side to encourage you? "Stone upon stone a dam is built and drop by drop the lake filled up." Nothing is impossible for the industrious. So do not lose heart. By regular spinning you are sure to increase your speed and you will improve your hand by constant practice in writing clear and bold letters. I know of a great many people who have thus improved their handwriting. You have done well in taking up the work of the Ashram stores. Now do not give it up but do it perfectly. Never mind if you don't have to keep accounts, but you should acquaint yourself with the general principles. If this work takes up so much of your time that you cannot spin for two hours every day, you may spin for a shorter period but with concentration. It is better to spin for a short time with application than to spin longer and impatiently; for you will thus spin stronger and more uniform yarn and that too faster.

Do keep me informed about Gangadevi.

Yours,

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 62

361. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

NANDI DURG,
Vaisakha Krishna 5 [May 21, 1927]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Jamnalalji is here since a couple of days ago. He has conveyed your message to me. I can think of nothing further to write to you than what I have already done. Regarding an audience with the Emperor I think you should not try for one. You should not, however, refuse it if the Secretary of State for India or the Prime Minister proposes to arrange it. As far as I know I think political matters are not discussed with the British Monarch. Only formal greetings are exchanged. Do meet the ministers and talk with them whatever you want to. Observe closely the British jails and also visit the poorer districts of London with some knowledgeable person and study the condition of the poor. Once or twice, on a Saturday evening, stand near the pubs of the poor and the bars of the rich and watch their doings.

I am improving day by day.

I wrote to *pujya* Malaviyaji long ago. I expect no reply from him as answering letters is contrary to his nature. But he does send a telegram in reply to one. I am going to write to him again all the same.

I hope you are well.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6147. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

362. HE SHOULD BE DISMISSED

I have now got the name and the address of the doctor, the account of whose inhuman treatment of an *Antyaja* woman was given to us by Shri Amritlal Thakkar.[1] Now an inquiry is being made into the case and in the mean time I do not see any necessity of disclosing his identity. A well-known doctor friend writes:[2]

[1] *Vide* "Man's Inhumanity to Man", 5-5-1927.

[2] The letter is not translated here.

My reason for publishing this letter is that the inhuman treatment of the Antyaja woman was such as no one can possibly condone. I do not believe that if the doctor is a private practitioner, the only alternatives before us are to grieve over the incident in helpless silence, if we wish to follow the path of non-violence, or, if not, give the doctor a thrashing. A thrashing is not likely to make the doctor change his ways. Antyaja brethren will not benefit in any way, and we will probably fail either to do justice to the doctor or win redress for the cruel ill-treatment of the woman. One who follows non-violence need not feel helpless. The path of non-violence is neither for the coward nor for the stupid. It is for those who are ever vigilant. The law of violence concerns the body and its requirements, while the law of non-violence appeals to the heart. Through non-violence we can arouse religious consciousness among the people, which means cultivating bold and true public opinion. If the true spirit of compassion were alive in the village in which this incident occurred, such cruelty would never have been possible. The poor doctor was only an agent. The spirit of cruelty was in the atmosphere and that is why he had the courage to demand two rupees in advance and, though he got the money, felt afraid that he would be polluted by touching the Antyaja woman, even for treating her. It is the duty of men who follow the path of non-violence to be always vigilant and educate public opinion so as to create an atmosphere in which men like the doctor would find no encouragement for the evil in them.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 22-5-1927

363. *THE COW AND THE BUFFALO*

A votary of non-violence writes:[1]

When writing the article on the cow and the buffalo, I had assumed that no clarification was called for about the matter of swaraj to the buffalo. When we domesticate an animal, we deprive it of its freedom, however good our intention in domesticating it may be. Hundreds of Englishmen feel happy in the belief that they rule India with a good motive and, even if we reject

[1] The letter is not translated here. Referring to Gandhiji's article "Cow *v.* Buffalo or Cow-*cum*-Buffalo?", 8-5-1927, the correspondent had asked what Gandhiji had meant by granting swaraj to the buffalo.

able to explain what needs to be done, it is for every individual worker to experiment on his own and discover how to do it. There was a time when appropriate changes could be effected in our civilization and people accepted the need for such changes. As long as these conditions of progress were accepted, so long, we can say, our civilization was living. Now we believe that whatever is written in a book which is published as a Shastra and which finds its way into our hands is the Lord's word and cannot be altered in any way. We must get out of this horrible mental death. We can see with our own eyes that there have been changes in our ways of thought and life in every age. Accepting this truth, cultured workers should enter the villages with confidence in themselves. It is necessary for all of them to accept certain general principles; there will be differences in the methods of implementing them. That is inevitable and should be welcomed. From that we shall find the best ways of implementing those principles. From this point of view, the question whether we should introduce Western machines and, if so, to what extent, becomes secondary. The general principle is that we should produce or make whatever we can in the villages themselves, and while we can do with the indigenous razor, should not bother to introduce the German Krupp razor because it is regarded as superior. If, however, we cannot make the sewing needle in the village, we should not set our face against the easily available and cheap needle from Austria. I see nothing wrong in accepting from any quarter whatever is good and is worth accepting and which we can assimilate.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 22-5-1927

364. LETTER TO ISABEL BAMLET

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 22, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. When I say[1] the problem is not so simple as it appears to you, I mean two things. It is not enough merely to take the name of God or believe in this thing or the other or even in this man or the other; but it is necessary ever to wait upon God and find out what His will is. I have found this to be a most difficult, though very agreeable, task. It is often a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Isabel Bamlet", 10-5-1927.

young father, who is daily getting younger, to serve the country with the same devotion that her young father is doing; and if her husband is at all lukewarm, to touch him with her spirit and make him joint partner in such service, as he would be joint partner in all the joys and sorrows of life. It is no use my even wishing that there should be no sorrow and all joy. It would be a flat and dull picture without any beautiful shades. There may be joys but they must be relieved by occasional sorrows. So my wish and hope is that God will give them a fair measure of joys of life if He must also give them doses of sorrows to remind them that He is not to be forgotten in the midst of life's joys.

I was wondering what you were doing and how you fared in Rangoon. You have kept me without a letter now for a very long time. I suppose it is all deliberate and out of considerateness for a bed-ridden friend. Raihana also has followed suit. But you should know that neither your letter nor hers can possibly be a tax on my energy.

Give my love to the bride and the bridegroom and all the friends and members of the family who may have gathered there to celebrate the coming event and accept the same for yourself and Mrs. Abbas.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9558

366. *LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 22, 1927

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN,

As you know I am just now bed-ridden and I must therefore dictate my reply to your letter of the 20th April just received. It is difficult to recall what I wrote in all my letters to you. So far as my memory serves me, there is not a single letter of yours which has gone by without an acknowledgement. There are many compliments which I do not and cannot appropriate; but the one about my being a prompt correspondent, I can ever claim in spite of your different experience. For, everybody else of my acquaintance has paid me the compliment of being a prompt correspondent, that is of course comparatively to many others.

[1] Permanent address

now being published in instalments by Ganesan. I am afraid it will be some time before the whole history is available in English.

Do see Mr. Sastri, India's first Agent for South Africa. He is an extremely fine man. As you know he is Gokhale's successor. He knows all about you and is himself eager to see you.

I am getting better. Of those you know Mrs. Gandhi and Devdas are with me.

Yours sincerely,

MISS SCHLESIN
BOX 2284
JOHANNESBURG
(SOUTH AFRICA)

From a photostat: S.N. 12353

367. LETTER TO REV. STANLEY JONES

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 22, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is a letter from Miss Schlesin, a dear friend in South Africa. You will be interested in it. Please return it after perusal.

I must ask you to tell Mrs. Jones again that the pamphlet addressed to boys and girls on purity of life is still being hatched in my mind and I have not despaired of being able to write out something or rather dictate something from this sick-bed.

I am now gradually regaining the lost strength.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure 1
REV. STANLEY JONES
SITAPUR, U.P.

From a photostat: S.N. 14127

of others. All this does not however mean that I regard the life of the Prophet to have been perfect or that the Koran itself is a perfect book. Like all other religious books including our own, there are passages which cause difficulty. But the difficulties caused in reading the Koran are not greater than those caused by reading books of other faiths. Christianity, I surmise, admittedly is a religion of peace; but the Old Testament which is part of Christian teaching is full of blood and thunder, and the history of early Christianity is also by no means creditable to the Christians.

You ask me to quote from the Vedas passages alike to those in the Koran. You have yourself admitted the reference to the *dasyus*. The gloss you put upon the passages relating to *dasyus* may be quite all right; but that is precisely how sympathetic commentators of the Koran explain similar passages. *Dasyus* do not consider themselves to be wicked.

Everybody justifies his description of practices by imputing wickedness to those whom he distrusts. General Dyer himself surely believed that English men and women were in danger of losing their lives if he did not take the measures he did. We who know better call it an act of cruelty and vengeance. But from General Dyer's own standpoint, he is justified. Many Hindus sincerely believe that it is a proper thing to kill a man who wants to kill a cow[1] and he will quote scripture for his defence and many other Hindus will be found to justify his action. But strangers who do not accept the sacredness of the cow will hold it to be preposterous to kill a human being for the sake of slaying an animal. Guru Nanak[2] who undoubtedly read the Koran and is reported even to have gone to Mecca, returned with lofty regard for Islam. Kabir[3] did likewise. So did Dadu. I cannot therefore help thinking that it is a fruitless and undesirable effort to show that the Koran is a wicked book and that followers of the Koran are still more so. I suggest that the better method is to find out the good points and the beauties of these writings which have transformed the lives of those who have believed in them. It is unsafe and even dangerous to judge Islam and Mussalmans by the conduct of many of those who are misrepresented here in India and then to seek to ascribe their conduct to the teachings of the Koran. In order to defend the general trend of the Koran in favour of peace I am not required to disprove any atrocity by a

[1] The source has "to kill men who want to kill a cow".

[2] 1469-1538; religious reformer and founder of Sikhism

[3] Mystic poet and saint of medieval India; disciple of Ramananda

370. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 23, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Throughout the week I have not written to you though I have received more than one letter from you. And for the most part for the present I propose not to write more than once per week. I want to conserve my energy for the work for *Young India*, *Navajivan* and *Gita*. I am doing now at least five times as much as I used to on the *Gita*. I want if possible to finish the translation before the end of August. And during this rest I would like to give more attention to *Young India* and *Navajivan* without feeling in any way responsible for filling the columns. But of course I shall write oftener if necessary or if you again have those moods returning. But you will not now.

I am so glad you resisted the bhang. It is as bad almost as liquor. In any case you will remember what I wrote[1] over the betel leaf offered by Hakimji—never to eat a single thing without knowing it and its quality. In case of doubt always refrain and refer to me if necessary. I understand from Jamnalalji to whom I mentioned the matter that Maharajji himself took it. Unfortunately many religiously-minded people take for feeling exalted. The exaltation is all false I know. However, you have done your duty by mentioning the thing to him. The things must take their own course now.

Jamnalalji showed me your Hindi letter to him. It was quite good. The writing was very good. J. leaves for Bombay tomorrow.

I am looking forward to your translation of Rolland's letter to you.

I have resumed bread or *bhakhari* and a vegetable for the midday meal. Today is the fifth day. Nothing untoward so far. I am walking too, better.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

The accompanying for Gangu.

From the original: C.W. 5230. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXII, p. 543.

372. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

Monday, May 23, 1927

Bal remembers that God was the first *brahmachari.* The idea seems extremely beautiful to me. A perfect *brahmachari* must be perfectly pure. Who else but God can be so? But we must try to become pure like Him. All Shastras proclaim that that is possible. There is nothing but joy in trying to become like Him. It is my experience that we do not get even one-ten-millionth part of that joy from the things of this world which are supposed to give us pleasure. Hundreds of yogis have said the same thing from their experience. Have faith in their experience and try to observe *brahmacharya* to the best of your ability.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

373. LETTER TO RADHA

May 23, 1927

I was glad to know that you were not frightened by that lump of earth. It was good that it did not cause you any great hurt. But what even if it had? If at all, such a lump of earth will hurt only the body. The body is like a glass bangle. The glass bangle which is the human body is of no account whatever in the eternity of *Brahman,* as life of a glass bangle is of none in comparison with the human life-span of a hundred years. What does it matter if it perishes today or tomorrow, or if it develops a crack? The intellect grasps this idea very easily, but one will never know fear if it sinks into one's heart. Such a person would never do wrong. He would oppress no one. We should return to this thought whenever faced with any danger, and, in order that it may come to us unfailingly at such times, we should constantly meditate on it.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

375. *A PRAYER*

May 24, 1927

Oh Lord! Give us the strength to follow what we sincerely believe to be dharma and while doing so to bear, with love and patience, people's censure, abuse, assault, death, penury or any other evil.[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

376. *LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 25, 1927

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your letter whilst I was on the sick-list and unable to do much correspondence. I am still convalescing and am able to do only a moderate amount of work; but I am making steady progress.

You have been there a long time now; but I know you have not wasted it. I hope however that Kamala will become completely restored when you return. If her health requires a longer stay, I presume that you will remain there.

I read most carefully your public report as also your private confidential report about the doings of the Oppressed Nations' Conference. I myself do not expect much from this league, if only because its free activity depends upon the goodwill of the powers that are partners in the exploitation of the oppressed nations and I feel that the members of the European nations that joined the league will not be able to sustain the last heat. For, they will not be able to accommodate themselves to what they would consider to be an injury to their self-interest. On our side there is danger of our people again looking to external forces and external aid for salvation instead of seeking to achieve it by evolving internal strength. But this is mere academic opinion. I am not at all

[1] In a letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi, Gandhiji advised him to say this at prayer-time every day.

377. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

NANDI HILLS,
May 25, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Jamnalalji delivered your letter to me and he told me you were sending a long letter. Ever since the receipt of your first letter, I have been constantly thinking over the matter. The President is here and he broached the subject yesterday. I mentioned Jawaharlal's name. He had not thought of it. He, however, preferred Ansari and I told him that if Dr. Ansari could be induced to accept the honour, there was an end to all talk about Jawaharlal and that I thought it would be good luck if Dr. Ansari could be induced to shoulder the burden. However, I have written to Jawaharlal and I send you a copy of my letter[1] to him. It expresses my opinion to date. At first I thought I would let you send my letter so that you could stop it if you liked; but I then thought that after all there was no harm in my letter going to Jawaharlal before you had seen it. You could add whatever you liked to my letter so as to enable Jawaharlal to form a correct judgement.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14614

378. LETTER TO H. CLAYTON

NANDI HILLS,
May 25, 1927

DEAR MR. CLAYTON,

I am extremely grateful to you for your prompt and exhaustive reply to my letter of the 13th instant. I have carefully gone through the cutting from the Municipal Corporation Proceedings of 1918; but I see nothing wrong there to warrant the suggestion that I made any inquiry or that I made any report to the late Dr. Turner. As I was interested in everything connected with untouchability and as I was closely in touch with the Servants of

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

379. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

NANDI DURG,
Vaisakha Krishna 9 [May 25, 1927]

BHAI TOTARAM,

I have your letter. Now I understand the true nature of Gangadevi's disease. Other things may well continue but she must be taken out. She cannot walk by herself. Therefore, either some boys should take her out in a chair for half an hour in the open air or even a wheel chair may be used. The wheel chair can be managed by one or two boys only. She can also lie down in it. Rest is imperative but so is open air. You should not hesitate to arrange for this. Ba seldom writes to anyone nor am I in the habit of mentioning her in my letters. Nevertheless she always remembers everyone.

Gangadevi should take it that my blessings always include Ba's.

I am very pleased by the fortitude shown by both of you and I know it is an example for all of us. May God grant you peace, as ever.

My health is improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2529

380. HIGHLY UNSATISFACTORY

I wish it was possible for me to tender the Government of Bengal congratulations upon the release of Sjt. Subhash Chandra Bose. The release has been granted, not because public opinion demanded it, not because Government considered the Chief Officer of the Calcutta Corporation to be guiltless, nor because they considered that he had been sufficiently punished for a crime of which neither he nor the public has any knowledge, but because their own medical officers considered the distinguished prisoner to be seriously ill, so seriously ill as to cause fear about his life. If Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose is a danger to society or to the life of anybody, and if he is a man of determination as he

381. AN APPEAL TO INDIAN HUMANITY

In another place will be found a substance of the observations made in the columns of *Navajivan* by Sjt. Kishorelal Mashruwala. He is a worker of long standing and was up to recently Registrar of the Gujarat Vidyapith, and it was only due to illness that he was obliged to relinquish the post. He is one of the most thoughtful among the silent workers we have in India. He weighs every word he writes or utters. I mention these qualifications of his; for I am anxious that his reflections should not be dismissed out of consideration as so many writings nowadays have to be.

The story of the abuse of the helpless women of the *Raniparaj* community is a blot upon the nation. Sjt. Kishorelal Mashruwala has made his appeal to the Parsis, and from his standpoint, rightly too. For it is the Parsis who will be better able, if anyone is, to influence the Parsi men who are said to be corrupting innocent womanhood. But I am painfully aware of the fact that it is not the Parsis alone who hold so cheap the honour of poor sisters. Indians belonging to the other faiths, placed in similar circumstances, have been known to behave exactly as the Parsi canteen-keepers are reported to be doing. But that is no justification whatsoever for the inhuman crimes of the latter. The lust for money, which drives these adventurers to a trade which they know saps the manhood of the otherwise fine forest-dwellers miscalled *Kaliparaj*, i.e., black people, tempts them to the worse crime of defilement.

The British Government or rather the Government of India and the Baroda State must be held primarily responsible for the tragedy described by Sjt. Mashruwala; for it is they, who for their wretched revenue allow liquor shops to be opened or to exist in the midst of these simple people. These people have never asked for these shops, and even if they had, it would be still criminal to open liquor shops for them, even as it would be to allow a little child to play with fire because he desires it. But a reformer does not *stop* before commencing action to philosophize or to distribute blame through golden scales. He begins his reform wherever the opportunity offers itself. And now that the corruption has been brought to light, it behoves Parsi reformers to go to the delinquents and appeal to their sense of honour and try to wean them from the crime of violating the womanhood of the simple,

or the officiating Chairman or the Secretary, any matter should be referred to me, it will come before me for guidance and advice. But the Council's decision and the arrangements I have come to with it are that I should not worry myself as hitherto over details and over every individual matter trifling or otherwise. They have taken an undertaking from me to refrain from doing so and to throw the burden on them and leave it for them to refer to me matters which they may consider to be important enough for referring to me. The test of a living organization is that it depends upon no single individual, however important, however able he may be. A living organization goes on irrespective of persons. The endeavour of the members of the Council is to make the Association a living and efficiently working organization. I trust, therefore, that khadi workers and khadi lovers will fall in with the new arrangement and render all the help they can to the Council in working this growing organization to the fullest extent possible.

An Example to Copy

The State of Jaora seems to be noted for its dyeing and printing. I understand that His Highness the Nawab Saheb is interested in the khadi movement and, in order to make khadi more attractive by putting it through the dyeing and printing processes and thus to encourage it, he has exempted khadi from any tax. I congratulate the State on this praiseworthy step, and hope that other States will grant favoured treatment to this great and growing national enterprise which is fraught with tremendous economic benefit to the starving millions.

Vivekananda and Spinning

A correspondent sends me interesting extracts from Vivekananda's answers to his American questioners. I take the following from them on spinning:

> Speaking of Indian village life he says: "In some places the common village girl with her spinning-wheel says: 'Do not talk to me of dualism, my spinning-wheel says, *So'ham, So'ham*, I am He, I am He.' What is the value of these machines and sciences? They have only one result; they spread knowledge. You have not solved the problem of want, but only made it keener. Machines do not solve the poverty problem; they simply make men struggle the more. Competition gets keener. . . . The value of everything is to be decided by how far it is a manifestation of God.

Young India, 26-5-1927

daily rest; no hurry; no bustle; no working to time and order; only one meeting per day, and not much speaking even then and so on. I am trying to adjust my mind to this new mode of life. If I succeed, it may be possible to prolong the life and still do a moderate amount of work. Please, therefore, do not worry about what has happened. Later on, I may even resume the routine work.

You should regularly give me a weekly letter and tell me how you and all the others are faring. As for myself, I am making steady progress daily. In a month's time, I might be able to do a little of gentle touring in Madras Presidency in order to take charge of the purses already collected.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1571; also from a microfilm: S.N. 19777

384. LETTER TO JANE HOWARD

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 26, 1927

DEAR MISS HOWARD,

I was delighted to receive your letter giving me details about the late Mr. Howard and yourself. Of your connection with him and your selfless devotion, I knew nothing. It does one's soul good to read the account you have sent me, for which I am most grateful to you.

I hope you are now getting your *Young India* regularly; if not, you will please let me know. Do please write to me from time to time. I am obliged to dictate this letter as I am just now on the sick-list.

With loving regards from Mrs. Gandhi and myself,

Yours sincerely,

MISS JANE HOWARD
'ROSEMARY'
50, PANDORA ROAD
MALVERN
JOHANNESBURG

From a photostat: S.N. 12354

[1] Permanent address

is even in the driest climate a certain humidity which makes the slivers more workable. And, at the time of doing the *takli*, if you are doing it in quiet, you can recite all your *Bhagavad Gita* or any other favourite *shlokas*.

Herewith receipt for Rs. 265-3-0 which they have sent me from the Ashram.

I am glad you have decided to make khaddar wear and spinning compulsory in the Vidyapith.

I hope you have not abandoned the idea of passing some time at the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure 1

From a microfilm: S.N. 19776

387. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

NANDI HILLS,
May 27, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

The occasion for writing this letter is supplied by your capital letter of the 17th instant to Maganlal of which he has sent me a copy.

Your suggestions are all perfect, if the premises can be accepted by us. Probably Maganlal has not even thought of what I am about to tell you; though I shouldn't be surprised if he has also thought of the same thing, for I think that he has assimilated the inwardness of the spinning movement. What I want to state is this: the movement is bound to fail if we expect to succeed by adopting the same methods, or very nearly the same methods with necessary adaptations, as the adversary, if such a term can be properly used under a plan of life which admits of no enemies. In my opinion, we have to devise other ways of making the movement a living and universal force at least so far as India is concerned. The adversary believes in the latest appliances and therefore is bound to adopt the methods of those who are adepts in using those appliances; but in the spinning movement, modern appliances are largely discarded and the few that are retained are used in a different way. Typewriters, shorthand assistance and the like are taken in our movement as a temporary measure. Immediately one goes to the villages, these become a hindrance

movement they will distinguish themselves in the work they have undertaken by coming up to the highest level. I have entered into this elaborate argument—very badly expressed because it is for the first time that I am reducing to writing this thought about the movement—because I am anxious that you who are saturated with the spirit of the spinning movement should understand all that is at the back of my mind and then give me the benefit of your criticism. If I have not expressed myself clearly, as I am afraid I have not, do not please hesitate to ask me for further explanation and by an interchange of a few letters, probably, I shall be able to express myself more clearly than I have done. But of course apart from what I have said above, there is much to be said for your view.

Young India and *Navajivan* are not all I want them to be. There are reasons for it into which however I need not enter just now. Some are avoidable and some are unavoidable. I hope to be able to cope with those that are avoidable.

I got the book on vitamins. I read it through as soon as I got it. It is a good book. But it failed to convince me. The subject of vitamins has still, so far as I can see, to be investigated. The author's statement does not appear to me to be the final word. Their ruling out all the nuts and the pulses in preference to meat foods goes against the grain and is contrary to all I have read in the vegetarian literature. If what the authors have said be the final word about them, it is a severe blow to vegetarianism. But the authors could not possibly have sufficient data about the effect of nuts and pulses to enable them to come to a just decision. Accurate observation about the efficacy or the inefficacy of vegetable protein foods can only be made on an extensive scale in India, where alone one meets thousands of born vegetarians. Their diet and their habits have to be scientifically observed and analysed before safe deductions can be drawn; and then, too, there are so many disturbing factors. Climate, harmful customs and suchlike have to be taken into account before using the values of foods taken by them. I am therefore taking all the statements in that book with a great deal of caution. The late A. F. Hills was President of the Vegetarian Society in London. He was a good man. I do not know the extent of his scientific knowledge. But he indulged in bold speculations about diet. He carried on a series of experiments himself. He wrote a number of articles on what he called "vital food". He divided foods into three or four divisions : one for those whose occupation was pre-

green vegetable. The authors of the book say that addition of soda destroys the vitamins in the vegetables. But without soda, the vegetables refuse to be soft. I have therefore decided to add soda to the vegetable. It is difficult to digest it unless it is thoroughly cooked. Uncooked green cabbage, my system rejects. You will have observed that all the four vitamins are to be found in milk. They are to be found also in the fruits I am taking and therefore I do not lose much by adding soda at the time of cooking cabbage or Indian marrow. There is no difficulty about the cooking of spinach without soda and so whenever I get spinach, soda is not added. There is no occasion for worry about my health; for, I seem to be getting better though slowly. No food will give me personal satisfaction unless I can revert to fruits and nuts. But it seems to me that I shall have to close this earthly life without getting that personal satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

Forgive me this very long letter. I did not know it was going to be so long.

From a photostat: S.N. 12574

388. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

NANDI DURG,
Krishna 11 [May 27, 1927][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have heard what you wrote about Ramachandra to Mahadev. I have nothing to say about it at this moment. Since you have handed over my letter to him, watch its effect. Talk over the matter with Jamnalalji when he comes there and do what is necessary. Then if there is anything for me to write, let me know.

Govindji's letter is very nice. I have conveyed to him the thoughts it raised in me. Herewith a copy of my reply.[2] Read it yourself and let Narandas too read it. If he has not read the original letter, let him do so. If any ideas occur to you on reading my reply, write to me. If there is in it anything that you do not understand, please let me know. We would obviously be

[1] Inferred from the contents

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

gone there to perfect your study of Hindi and in so doing to give such service as you can and as may be acceptable. And that brings me to your Hindi.

You have been quickened into action yourself. Of course our formula has been Hindi first, everything else after. I had felt that the formula was being somewhat overlooked. In my letters whilst you were in Delhi, I had emphasized this thing when you were discussing the various limitations of the Delhi Gurukul. But I thought that to bring the formula up and further in my letters would be undesirable, and I knew that you were yourself on the watch and would pull yourself up if you found yourself napping. This you have now done, and I am glad and quite satisfied. Of course there are innumerable things you can do usefully wherever you are placed. And the test of the possession of the religious sense really consists in one's being able to pick out the 'rightest' thing out of many things which are all 'right' more or less. This is the meaning of a verse in the *Bhagavad Gita* which says: "Better even to die doing one's duty, however lowly it may be, than doing some other's however grand it may be."[1] And so, I have myself not a shadow of doubt that you will be entitled to pass by many things which you can easily do, if the one thing for which you have left Sabarmati has at all to be sacrificed or neglected. And, if there or at any other place, you become an unwelcome visitor because of your insistence upon that one thing, that is sufficient warning for you to leave the place. And when you feel that imperative call, you will simply not listen to any other suggestion. But that burning overpowering desire must come from within. I must not goad, I *will* not goad. I shall be entirely satisfied with what progress you can make, no matter how slow it is. You will do your Hindi in the way that you think is best, and if you find that it is more conducive to your peace of mind to have several other occupations side by side with Hindi, you will take them up. Do not therefore please continuously think of what I would like, but do what you think you can easily, without impairing your health, of both body and mind; and in the execution of your plan when you want my assistance or advice, you shall fall back upon it immediately, as for instance about going to Brij Kishen. Your telegram leads me to think that now there is no occasion for you to leave that Ashram. But you evidently do not know that Brij Kishan has not been keeping well and has therefore been sent to Mussoorie. But if you desire to go to

[1] XVIII. 7

paintings. Both these, we average beings will have to take on trust. It is only the privileged few who have got the special faculty for understanding and appreciating either those discoveries, or those paintings. These do not appear to us to be incredible and we are able to accept them on faith only because in favour of these we have the testimony of a larger number of witnesses than we can possibly have for the things of permanent value, such as human perfection of the utmost type. Therefore the limitation that you have accepted is quite a workable thing for the time being. For, even inside the limitation, there is ample scope for widening the field for the progress of the state of being and remaining unruffled in the face of the onslaught of sorrows and trials, which before regeneration would have paralysed us.

I am glad you have intensified your devotions. I do not know what you are reading at present. And I do not know whether I told you that we must arrive at a time when we do not need the solace of many books but that we make one book yield us all we want. In the last stage, of course, when life becomes one of perfect surrender and complete self-effacement, the support of even one book becomes unnecessary. At the present moment, though I am reading many things, the *Bhagavad Gita* is becoming more and more the only infallible guide, the only dictionary of reference, in which I find all the sorrows, all the troubles, all the trials arranged in the alphabetical order with exquisite solutions. I think I did tell you that the *Song Celestial* was the best rendering I had come across of the *Bhagavad Gita*. But if you do not know Sanskrit, I know that a knowledge of Sanskrit to enable you to understand the *Bhagavad Gita* is easily within your power. You can almost in a month's time know enough Sanskrit to understand the original text. For, though the English rendering is grand and though you might be able to get some Hindi or Urdu translation also, of course there is nothing like the original. The original will enable you to give your own meaning and gloss to the text. That book is not a historical record, but it is a record of the concrete experiences of its author, whether it was really Vyasa or not I am not concerned. And if it is a record of anybody's experience, it must not be beyond us to be able to test the truth of it by repeating the experience. I am testing the truth almost every day in my life and find it never failing. This of course does not mean that I have reached the state described, for instance, at the end of the Second Chapter. But I know that the more we carry out the prescription given in it, the nearer do we answer the description given of the perfect state.

Congress before the session was over, and I did not know that Pandit Motilalji was in Calcutta on the 1st January. But whether he was or not, he certainly knew nothing even of the fact that I was writing to you. I simply felt that I would be doing a friendly turn by writing to you as I did.

I know nothing about the Lakhna Raj case. Your letter was the first information to me about even the existence of Lakhna Raj. That there was any case in connection with it, I had no knowledge whatsoever.

I venture to think that your description of Pandit Motilalji is, to say the least, ungentlemanly. He may be all the things you have said of him, but the code of honour prevalent in good society debars one from impugning before a stranger the character of any man, whoever he may be. And, after all, I am a perfect stranger to Your Highness. In spite of your imputations on the character of Pandit Motilalji, he remains for me a high-souled, able, self-sacrificing patriot enjoying in the country a position not attained by many public workers. As it happens at the present moment, his politics are not my politics. But if they were mine, I should certainly deem it an honour to allow my judgement to be influenced and tested by his.

Yours sincerely,

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF NABHA
DEHRA DUN (U.P.)

From a photostat: S.N. 12581

393. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

NANDI HILLS,
May 28, 1927

DEAR DOCTOR,

I have your letter. Though I do not propose to trouble you to come over here, I would like you definitely, if you can, to write out what you will have me do, and I shall incorporate as many of your suggestions as it is possible for me.

I cannot get distilled water in Nandi. I know that it can be made by oneself. But I have not got the proper tubes and utensils for it here. When I go down to Bangalore, I shall see whether I can procure distilled water.

As it is, I take raw milk diluted with boiling water. This seems to agree with me better. I am taking 30 ounces of raw

394. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 12 [May 28, 1927]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter to hand. It may well be that they are working without getting results. But what I got from your diary you could not have given even through many letters. Therefore even if it relates only to a day prior to that on which you write to me, do let me have your diary. It is good that you regularly write to Ramdas.

My health is improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 471. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

395. LETTER TO TARA MODI

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 12 [May 28, 1927]

CHI. TARA,

Your letter. I learn from Surendra's letter that you have grown very weak. Strength which is lost will come back only gradually. Need I tell you to have patience? Moreover, the presence of Nathji is for you a soothing balm. I write this not with the expectation of any reply from you but only to bring you peace, if I can. Ramniklal will write, if necessary; if you want to convey anything to me, tell him about it. But on no account should you write yourself. I find from my own experience that good fresh milk, that is, pure milk if available there, is easier to digest, when mixed with boiling water. Moreover, all doctors here agree that if a cow is free from disease, if its udders are washed, if the container is clean and the milkman washes his hands well with hot water before milking the cow, such fresh milk when taken without boiling is more nourishing and easier to digest. If it is boiled, the vitamins are destroyed.

We have already a long tradition of drinking slow-boiled milk. So if it is available, give it a trial.

stances, khadi work simply cannot be done. Perhaps you are not aware that an attempt was made to get the Charkha Sangh registered. The Charkha Sangh is an independent limb of the Congress enjoying the power to secede from the parent body. The officials agreed to register it if this spiritual bond were broken. We decided against getting the Charkha Sangh registered and declined to snap that bond.

Well, I am dictating this from a height of 5,000 feet; you may therefore look at it in the right perspective after making the necessary allowances. I write not for being acted upon, but only because it may help you in finding some solution. I have discussed this matter with Jamnalalji to some extent. He will soon be at the Ashram when you too should see him and do what you all wish to. But then "the master's advice must be left at the door".[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

397. *WELCOME DONATION FOR CAUSE OF SUPPRESSED CLASSES*

A telegram has been received from Shri Vallabhbhai saying that a generous gentleman has donated Rs. 50,000 for the benefit of the suppressed communities, and another has donated Rs. 2,500. I saw in the papers that the name of the first donor is Mansukhlal Chhaganlal. It seems that the other has not thought it proper to let his name be known. I congratulate both these gentlemen. My conviction grows stronger day by day that such thoughtful donations are alone religious charities. It is a happy sign that the desire to make donations for religious causes is still alive among us. But we hardly know what is religion. I have often said that in this age much *adharma* is done in the name of dharma. On the one hand, therefore, we have to nurse the religious sentiment of the people and, on the other, we have to point out the right way for the exercise of that sentiment. Good intentions by themselves do not take one to heaven. There is a saying in English that the path to hell is paved with good intentions. There is much truth in this. Many thieves steal with good motives. Many are those who tell lies with good motives. Even a religious person like Yudhishthira makes the mistake of

[1] A Gujarati proverb

themselves to active work of service and make themselves proficient in their field of work than for preachers who go round exhorting others.

But, along with this letter[1], I have before me a press-cutting containing a long interrogatory addressed to me on the question of cow-protection. The underlying suggestion obviously seems to be that the methods of cow-protection advocated by me are not consistent with my profession of Hinduism. For in his introductory remarks to his questions the writer has tried to make light of the basic principle of cow-protection that I have formulated, viz., that what is economically wrong cannot be religiously right. In other words, if a religion cuts at the very fundamentals of economics it is not a true religion but only a delusion. My critic on the other hand believes that this view is opposed to the teachings of our ancient scriptures. I, at least, am not aware of a single text in opposition to this view nor do I know of any religious institution that is being maintained in any part of the world today in antagonism to the elementary principles of economics. As for Nature, anyone who has eyes can see, that it always observes the principle that I have stated. For instance, if it has implanted in its creation the instinct for food it also produces enough food to satisfy that instinct from day to day. But it does not produce a jot more. That is Nature's way. But man, blinded by his selfish greed, grabs and consumes more than his requirements in defiance of Nature's principle, in defiance of the elementary and immutable moralities of non-stealing and non-possession of other's property and thus brings down no end of misery upon himself and his fellow-creatures. To turn to another illustration, our Shastras have enjoined that the Brahmin should give knowledge as charity without expecting any material reward for it for himself. But they have at the same time conferred upon him the privilege of asking for and receiving alms and have laid upon the other sections of the community the duty of giving alms, thus uniting religion and economics in a common bond of harmony. The reader will be able to find further instances of this kind for himself. The religious principle requires that the debit and credit sides of one's balance-sheet should be perfectly square. That is also the truest economics and therefore true religion. Whenever there is any discrepancy between these two it spells bad economics and makes for unrighteousness. That is why the illustrious author of the *Gita* has defined yoga as

[1] What follows is the translation as found in *Young India*, 3-11-1927.

take it upon himself to get the carcasses removed to the nearest tannery or get the preliminary processes performed upon it and send the useful parts there.

4. The establishment of such tanneries as I have described does not require much capital outlay. Only some initial expenditure would be needed to train up workers for this work.

5. It is true that at present the leather prepared from slaughtered hides is superior in quality to that prepared from dead hides. But during the late War the Government of India spent enormous sums of money to improve the quality of leather from dead hides; and tannery experts have told me that dead hides can be tanned into as good leather as leather from slaughtered hides. I myself am conducting experiments in this direction. In Cuttack, Sjt. Madhusudan Das has been doing the same for a number of years and with success as he tells me. The Calcutta Government Research Tannery is also at present engaged in similar experiments.

But the tragedy of it today is that we annually export crores worth of hides to foreign countries, and by ignorantly using leather goods made from the hides of slaughtered cattle, become indirectly participators in the sin of their slaughter.

It rests in our hands entirely to prevent the export of hides of our dead cattle to foreign countries. And this we can easily do by bringing the export trade in hides under our control through the establishment of tanneries on altruistic lines. We cannot only save nine crores of rupees annually to our country but by employing that sum properly save a countless number of cattle.

I need hardly say that the humanitarian tanneries that I have suggested would also be utilizing the bones and other useful parts of the dead cattle. In fact it is more necessary than ever.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-5-1927

a false position by bringing in his name in the pages of *Young India* and in connection with an Italian letter.

I see that your letter is three letters rolled into one. Please tell Perin and Khurshed that you are not there to encourage their laziness. It will be time for them to cease to work and let you work for them when they cease to eat and let you eat for them. There is a verse[1] in the *Gita* whose paraphrase is: Those who eat without working are thieves, except of course patients like myself. For myself I have still only progress to report. It is getting colder here day by day. This is the rainy season here though the rains have not yet properly set in.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 14129

401. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

NANDI HILLS,
May 29, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your very important letter. It crossed mine. I cannot appropriate the credit you give me for gentle criticism of your handwriting. What I wanted to say was that although I liked handwritten letters, there was no occasion for you to revert to writing your letters for my sake and that you should continue typewriting as you believe in it, and as I know it does result in economy of time. Nor do I consider your handwriting to be bad. It might be clearer. But fortunately for my friends I have my own writing as the criterion and that being so, I know very few whose writing is worse than mine, and yet because of my dislike of typewriters, if I could possibly write with my own hand, I will inflict that illegible hand in preference to having my letters typed or typing them myself. The reason underlying is this. If I have any concern for my friends, I should endeavour to write a better and more legible hand. Typewriter is a cover for indifference and laziness. Moreover I believe in the dictum—handwriting reveals the writer. Typewriting certainly results in economy of time. But whilst I admit that time is money, I do not admit that money is everything, and therefore I can conceive innumerable occasions when economy of time would be misplaced.

[1] III. 12

little concentration that it is necessary to hammer away at one very simple but fairly universal thing, and if that succeeds, the rest can follow. And agriculture is an industry which can only be improved when it receives state assistance. In an ill-governed country, I think with Thoreau that the citizen who resists the evil government must ignore property rights. And without assurance of settled ownership, it is impossible to do much in the way of agriculture. I do not want to elaborate this thing. I have said sufficient to enable you to fill in the rest. Whilst your suggestion does not seem to me to be feasible so far as the untouchables are concerned and difficult of accomplishment, even as a general scheme the extract sent by you is valuable and I propose as soon as I find space to reproduce it in *Young India* so that those who are at all inclined in the direction might take the matter up.

I did not get the larger volume about vitamins. What I got was *Food and Health*. But that book also gives enough information about vitamins. Dr. Kellogg's writings I know. I have read his book, and if it has not been lost as many of my books have been, it must be in the Ashram library. However, you seem to know him personally, and I shall look forward to what he has to say. Have you put the whole case before him and asked whether he can suggest an effective vegetarian substitute for milk in the case of patients?

Yours sincerely,

R. B. GREGG, ESQ.
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 14132

402. LETTER TO T. N. SARMA

NANDI HILLS,
May 29, 1927

MY DEAR SARMA,

I remember your visit at Calcutta and the conversation that you had over your Ashram. I am sorry about your wife's illness. I am likely to descend this hill in the course of a few days and go down to Bangalore for completing the cure. When I am in Bangalore do come whenever you wish and we shall have a chat.

All you say about Hanumantarao is quite true. He was a man among men. Let us make him live in us and through us

404. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL

NANDI HILLS,
May 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am likely in the course of a few days to go down to Bangalore and take the rest of the cure there. Do come whenever you can and I shall be delighted to see you whether I am on the Hill or in Bangalore. You will know at once from the papers when I have gone to Bangalore. In any case you can't come to the Hill without taking Bangalore on your way.

I am aware that so many friends have prayed for my recovery. My counter-prayer in answer to all the prayers of known and unknown friends has been that God may, if He spares me, make me worthy of those loving prayers.

I am making fair progress.

Yours sincerely,

K. T. PAUL, ESQ.
THOTTAM
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 14135

405. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NANDI,
Vaishakha Vad [*14, May 29, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

There has been no letter from you this week.

Have you received any letters from Mirabehn? I find from her letters that she has been working hard among both men and women. There is in her letters something about which I would like you to know. She writes that the women with whom she comes into contact are all extremely good, but at the same time terribly ignorant. They do not know even the simplest things. If Mirabehn talks to them of the spinning-wheel, they are sur-

[1] The source has *Vaishakha Vad* 13, which however was a *kshaya* date.

407. *LETTER TO IMPERIAL INDIAN CITIZENSHIP ASSOCIATION*

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I wish your meeting every success. The Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri embarks upon his arduous mission under the best of auspices. He takes with him the goodwill of all India, and both the Europeans and our countrymen in South Africa are looking forward to his advent. I know that if any man can possibly produce harmony between the Europeans and the Indian settlers, it is certainly Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri. May God give him all the wisdom and all the strength he will need in South Africa.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
THE IMPERIAL INDIAN CITIZENSHIP ASSOCIATION
PETIT BUILDING
359, HORNBY ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12355

408. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I have said my say. I understand your reasoning and value your determination. However, I send you the book on *Food and Health*. As a chemist you will understand it better than I can. Personally, I challenge many of the authors' conclusions. But my challenge is based upon prejudice. I attack their data on insufficiency of evidence; but I have no data myself to support my challenge. I know the healthier condition of widows.

So far as Nikhil is concerned, he need never go to Calcutta. If Hemaprabha Devi can be happy at the Ashram, she can live

409. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Either Jamnalalji committed a blunder or the interviewer. There is absolutely no chance even if I become obdurate of my being able to resume my tour in the middle of June. Let alone the doctors, I have myself no such confidence. Nandi has done me good. But there is much leeway yet to be made up. I get easily tired and I cannot move about with ease. A month more is the very least I shall require. What I feel is that I shall not be able to venture out much before the third week of July.

Rajagopalachari is not just now here. He has gone to Bangalore to find and prepare quarters for me there as the weather here is now becoming too bracing for me. He is the jailor in charge and it is he who has to dispose of me finally, so far as this Presidency is concerned. But in so far as I have any control over my movements, I would certainly love to be your guest if Salem is on the list at all. And, if it is not on the list, you can easily have it on the list by collecting a fat purse for the dumb millions from among your innumerable friends in Salem.

I never know that the European Association at Calcutta had passed such an original resolution as you have described.

Yes, I do feel, without being able to assign any justification for the feeling, that behind all the seeming anarchy, order is being evolved and that we shall not for ever remain a damned country.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
FAIRYFALLS VIEW
KODAIKANAL OBSERVATORY P.O.
KODAIKANAL HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 12586

412. *LETTER TO BASANTA KUMAR RAHA*

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. As I do not know whether the English letter is written by you or for you, I shall have a translation of this letter enclosed with this.

It is not because I do not want to comply with your proposal but because I have no fitness for becoming anybody's guru, being myself in search of one. After all a person who sets out to become anybody's guru, if he is a sincere man, must have confidence in himself. The relation of a teacher and disciple is not a mechanical one but it is organic. The only suggestion, therefore, that I can make to you is that if you cannot be satisfied with personal effort and struggle, you can have the guru of your imagination; but then it won't be my conscious self; for I should be utterly incapable of giving you unerring guidance which a true guru is supposed to give and you may draw what comfort it is possible for you to do from the imaginary picture. I am sorry that I can give you no other or further comfort. The best thing one can do however is to kneel down to God above and ask Him to give the required guidance. He is the only source of light and of peace.

Yours sincerely,

BABU BASANTA KUMAR RAHA
BARNES JUNCTION
DISTRICT JALPAIGURI (BENGAL)

From a photostat: S.N. 14137

in the course of the week and shall be in Bangalore at least for one month.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM, M.L.C.
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 14140

415. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

[End of May 1927][1]

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I have your letter. I am sorry to read of your illness. You need not have been over-enthusiastic. All that we do must be done with a detached mind. And nothing done in this way will be beyond our capacity, and therefore affect our health. You should spare no pains so long as you are not attached to results. To exert oneself beyond that is to ruin one's health and undo the work done. That was the cause of my breakdown. I did not observe even a nominal limit to my capacity during and after my tour of Maharashtra. Now, I am paying the penalty ten times over. Had I added even of a quarter of the last two months [spent in rest] to the Maharashtra tour, the programme would have been completed smoothly and possibly I would have been spared this illness. For me the shore is in sight but you have just set out on your voyage. Taking a lesson from my case, you should calm down and do quietly whatever you can. Milk and ghee may be taken without any qualms if considered necessary for recouping your strength. Haven't I said that a friend who gives up milk and ghee is himself responsible for the risk incurred and that if he cannot sustain his body with this abstinence he must forthwith return to the milk and ghee diet.

I expect to have another letter from you before you reply to this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6531

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's tour of Maharashtra and to the passage of "two months" since his "breakdown"

that the pamphlet was seen by one of my companions; but, as it was seen a long time after its receipt by him and as I was in the midst of my work which hardly left me time to see any pamphlet, he did not bring it to my notice. I am sorry that it remained without acknowledgement. I have now sent for it. I have leisure enough during my convalescence to look at your pamphlet; and if I trace it, I shall certainly read it and let you have my views upon it.

I am sorry that you had to remain in suspense for such a long time with reference to the two matters about which you had a right to expect from me at least an acknowledgement and it is contrary to my habit to leave such things unacknowledged.

Yours sincerely,

H. HARCOURT, ESQ.
119, GIPSY HILL
LONDON S.E. 19

From a photostat: S.N. 12494

418. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

June 1, 1927

How can I put obstacles in your way or in the way of anyone else who, prompted by a religious motive, undertakes a religious effort. But I wish to place a suggestion before you. Fasting concerns the body. Hence, though it has an important place in one's spiritual development, relatively it is a small thing. It is a means and serves a useful purpose only when the mind is behind it. I know that your mind cannot but be behind your fast, otherwise you could not have fasted for so many days. Nevertheless please think more deeply over the matter and reconsider it. Do you fast for some sort of self-purification? Do you weigh afterwards the benefits of your fasts? Or are you indifferent towards them? If you are, how do you justify your fasts as spontaneous acts? The desire for fruit is implicit in describing a fast as meant for self-purification. This is not an unworthy desire; it is a worthy one. In interpreting what is meant by the desire for fruit, one must use discrimination. One's duty is to be a *mumukshu*. A *mumukshu* is one who aspires after *moksha*. The true meaning of renunciation of the desire for fruit is that one who renounces it knows that the fruit does follow. He does not

life of every man a time when all effort appears futile and luckily God gives us no fore-knowledge of the end so as to avoid the frustration. Why then worry over the inevitable? The affairs of the nation depend neither upon Malaviyaji nor upon Lalaji[1] nor upon me. All are but instruments; moreover I think a good man's efforts bear fruit only after his death. It is not correct as Shakespeare says, "the evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones". Evil does not endure. Rama is still in our midst and we cherish his memory. Ravana and his wickedness are no more. Not even the wicked utter his name. Who knows what Rama was in his own age? The poet certainly says that in his own lifetime even Rama did not escape recriminations. But now all his imperfections have, with his body, turned to ashes and we worship him as an incarnation of God. And the Kingdom of Rama is much wider now than it ever was while he lived in the body. When I write this I don't mean to philosophize or persuade you to suppress your feelings. But I emphasize that we should never grieve over the death of one whom we regard as a saint. And we must have the firm belief that a saint's deeds begin to work or, say, truly bear fruit only after his death. The achievements which were regarded as great in his own time are only infinitesimal compared to the influence they will have in times to come. Yet it is certainly our duty to emulate to the best of our ability the good deeds of those whom we regard as saints of our age.

Regarding your health I would suggest if you have no faith in allopathy, and you need not have it, that you should visit the institutions of Louis Kuhne and Just when you go to Germany. Their treatment with open air and water has benefited hundreds of people. Contact the Vegetarian Society both at London and Manchester. There are always some nice, serious-minded people to be found there who will be courteous and considerate. Of course, you will come across some faddists and fanatics too. You said milk was not available on the steamer. Next time you should carry Horlick's Malted Milk. It is pure milk-powder. The chemists say that this dehydrated powder contains all that milk does. You can try it.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6148. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Lala Lajpat Rai

emission. We should not be frightened at such emission. It is the mind we should fear. Involuntary emission is Nature's warning to us that the mind has not been subjugated. We see that even lustful men remain complacent because they do not have involuntary emissions. They feel pleased with themselves because of their freedom from such emissions. But, truly speaking, their being self-satisfied in this manner is their fall. In America they employ means which prevent involuntary emissions while the mind remains filled with lustful thoughts. But to regard such a man as a *brahmachari* amounts to murdering the language. Hence, though safeguarding of the vital fluid is the external form of *brahmacharya*, one cannot definitely say that its preservation is necessarily a manifestation of *brahmacharya*. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that it is an essential aspect of complete *brahmacharya*. My point in writing this is that, if there is involuntary emission despite our continuous and sincere struggling to avoid it, despite our vigilance and after we have neglected to adopt no measure which can possibly help us to avoid it, we need not get frightened or lose heart and feel that we have committed a great sin; rather we should look upon it as kind Nature's warning and look deeper into ourselves. We should find out where evil desires are lurking in the mind and strive harder still to banish them. The effort is its own reward. If we have been cheating ourselves and mentally indulging our secret desires, we should make sure that we run away from those activities or associations which cause our downfall or make us weak. It should not matter if, in doing so, one ruins one's business or loses one's wealth and passes for a fool among the people.

It is necessary to be almost completely free from sensuous desires in order to be blessed by the vision of God; the desires that still remain will be destroyed only by that vision. There is no sure means which can help us to have this vision. No one else can bring us to it. Truly speaking, the Shastras and those learned in them can only recount their experiences, and, if we lack faith, their experience may awaken faith in us; but no one else can make the necessary effort on our behalf. I can, therefore, tell you only this: do not give up your struggle for a single moment. To get a vision of God is the highest aim of human effort. Add up, therefore, all the struggles that human beings are ready to undertake to get certain things in this world and add up all those efforts; it is necessary, in order to get a vision of God, to make an effort a myriad times more difficult than the sum of all those

accounts are kept and separate methods of feeding and housing the disabled and the working animals are adopted. Legislation and the State aid advocated by Sjt. Vaidya need not at present distract our attention. For there is immense scope for private effort, building public opinion in favour of the proposed methods and showing their workability in practice. We are so far behind, indeed, that we have not even enough trained workers to conduct dairies and tanneries along the lines suggested by Sjt. Vaidya. There are at least 1,500 pinjrapoles and goshalas according to the figures in my possession, which can, without much further donation, but by efficient management, test the usefulness of the methods. Their adoption will simply revolutionize the management of these institutions and put life into these, today for the most part, lifeless bodies. These pinjrapoles and goshalas, as they are at present being conducted, are more a salve to our conscience than a protection to the cow. The learned writer's categorical statement, that during the Vedic and the *Brahmana* period cow-slaughter was countenanced and beef was eaten, will be hotly contested by Pandit Satavalekar, who has been a close student of Vedic lore for the past 35 years, and by Acharya Ramadeva who claims to be a historian and to have critically studied the ancient history of Bharatavarsha. But with the historical portion practical men and women will not concern themselves. They will perhaps be content like me to hope that our ancestors in the Vedic times knew better than to seek to gain merit by sacrificing innocent animals or to satisfy their palate by eating beef.

Young India, 2-6-1927

423. CHOICE BEFORE US

A correspondent sends me a cutting from the Press giving most gruesome facts about the growing infantile crimes and illicit gratification among girls in the New World.

A boy of four years is reported to have shot his mother, because she forbade him to play with matches. When the police confronted him, he was in no way taken aback. He threatened "to shoot them too", and when questioned by the Coroner, he grew so impatient with him that he picked up a knife from among the exhibits lying in front of him and rushed to strike him. It is said, that hardly a day passes in America without some crime being committed by a boy or a girl, and in most Amercian

a living faith in a future state and therefore also in Divinity. The restraint of ancient or Eastern civilization arises from a belief, often in spite of ourselves, in a future state and the existence of a Divine Power. The record condensed above is a warning, if we will take it, against a blind imitation of the West, which one sees so often in the city life of India and especially among the educated classes. Some of the immediate and brilliant results of modern inventions are too maddening to resist. But I have no manner of doubt that the victory of man lies in that resistance. We are in danger of bartering away the permanent good for a momentary pleasure.

Young India, 2-6-1927

424. THE WHEEL OF LIFE AND THE VEDAS

Pandit Satavalekar of Aundh wrote in 1922 a booklet in Hindi called वेदमें चर्खा, i.e., *Charkha in the Vedas*, and favoured me with a copy whilst I was resting in the Yeravda jail. I glanced then through its pages and with interest, but asked myself what good would it be to us in this age of so-called advancement to know that the charkha was to be found in the Vedas. Everybody knows that our remote ancestors spun and wove in their cottages even as they did so many other things. But we no longer do them. So I said to myself. The booklet, I hastily concluded, was not of much practical value and I laid it aside. On the sick-bed I have again an opportunity of turning, so far as my strength permits, to quiet studies. Another book of Pandit Satavalekar (of which more hereafter) has attracted me to his writings, and he has now favoured me with another copy of the booklet in question. I observe that it has undergone a second edition. I have read it this time more carefully, and I find that the *mantras* cited by the author from the Vedas demonstrate not merely the fact that our ancestors in those times were spinning and weaving, but they present, perhaps, a, for us, novel way of looking at the wheel. Here is what may be called the key *mantra* for spinners and weavers from *Rig-Veda* (X. 53-6) quoted by the author:

> तंतुं तन्वन् रजसो भानुमन्विहि ज्योतिष्मतः
> पथो रक्षधिया कृतान् ॥ अनुल्वणं वयत
> जोगुवामपो मनुर्भव जनय दैव्यं जनम् ॥ ऋ. १० । ५३ । ६

I give a free rendering as follows:

The author has also shown that some of the most beautiful metaphors have been taken from the language of spinners and weavers.

I must resist the temptation to quote more extracts from this thoughtfully written booklet. There is a *mantra* which proves that the soldiers of those days were not above doing these processes; that the bridegroom's garment was always made by the bride as is still the custom in Assam.

There is one thing, however, the author leaves to other research scholars in the Vedic lore to discover. So far as he has been able to study the Vedas, he has not found a single equivalent for cotton as he has for wool and silk. He is, therefore, unable to say whether in those days our ancestors had only woollen and silken garments or whether they had already discovered the cotton fibres.

Young India, 2-6-1927

425. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

NANDI HILLS,
June 2, 1927

I have your sweet little note. But it is disturbing to think that you are not yet well. If your recovery is dependent upon mine, well then you must already have recovered, because you had two letters from me telling you that I was on the road to recovery. I hope you got those two letters. But though I am on the road to recovery, I have to take care of myself and take plenty of rest. I, therefore, do most of my correspondence lying down and through dictation. Hence this typewritten letter.

You know my theory of the disease, don't you? I regard it as a result of some conscious or unconscious sin as I call or breaches of Nature's laws. When you lose mental equanimity, be it ever so little, it sets up terrible agitations in the body, and these latter produce visible effects upon it. I know that I am not free from these affections or perturbations as I would call them and I had the collapse. I do not flatter myself with such unctuous pleas as overwork, terrific strain, etc., in order to drown my conscience. On the contrary, I know that overwork and terrific strain are just as apprehensible, even though they may be in a good cause, as a drinking-bout or visiting cinemas. The results of both are the same. And, if I have attained equanimity, I should unerringly know when to work, when not to work and should

427. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN

NANDI HILLS,
June 2, 1927

I am glad I have at least succeeded in drawing you. I have been looking forward to your letter especially after Perin had prepared me for it. I am glad also of the confession. But a good confession results in a change of ways. But I see you have not yet become a Gujarati scholar, nor evidently did those excellent copy-books sent by grandfather produce any impression upon you. But here I cannot judge. If I did, it would be like pot calling the kettle black. In spite of schoolmasters having put copy-books before me, I write a hand much worse than yours.

I thought that Nargis had sent A. E.'s book *The Interpreters*. It came before your letter. I think that very book was sent to me through Jaijee when I was in Yeravda. But alas! I was discharged before I could read the book through. There is not much danger of a sudden discharge now. I shall therefore read it and tell you what I think of it.

We remove to Bangalore on Sunday. You must all come there. There is going to be a Khadi Exhibition in July. I am writting to Mithubehn about it, and if you could come for that exhibition, you could all become stall holders and take the Bangalore public by storm.

I am gaining strength slowly.

Yours,

SHRIMATI GOSIBEHN
OMRA HALL, PANCHGANI

From a photostat: S.N. 14143

your duty either to end the bhang or to end your presence there. I regard it to be next to impossible, both for men and women, to remain without sensual agitations whilst they are under the influence of bhang even though they may be able to exercise outward bodily control, though from my own experience of it, it seems to me that when I was under the influence of bhang any man or woman could have played fast or loose with me. And now that your eyes have been opened, it would be improper to lend any countenance to that Ashram unless they are sincerely ready to reform their ways. You may not co-operate with the Ashram even to gain a kingdom or even if it was the only place where you could finish your Hindi course. You may tell them that you are not there to impose your views, but as a friend you were bound to draw their attention to the evil which had forced itself upon your attention, and that unless the evil was eradicated—and that too not for your sake but out of conviction—you could not remain there to receive personal courtesies and personal favours in the shape of Hindi teaching. If therefore they could not see eye to eye with you about the evil of bhang, you would still be friends with them but you couldn't possibly remain in the Ashram, nor Valunjker and Gangu who are also under the same discipline as you. You may read this letter to whomsoever you like. Discuss first with Valunjker—for, he is a wise man—the propriety of the step I have suggested, see what he has to say, see also what Gangu has to say. She is like a simple glorious child. But wisdom often comes out of the mouths of babes and her intuition may be better than our reasoned judgement. And then if you feel like referring to me, do so by all means. If you wish to consult Jamnalalji, you may write to him also. I am sending him your letter and a copy of this so that you don't have to say much to him. Do nothing in a hurry, nothing in a huff, certainly nothing in anger; but take whatever step you wish after humble prayer and with the greatest deliberation.

I am perfectly at ease having dictated this letter. Such experiences, when they come to us unsought, are precious trials that God sends to those who would listen to the "still small voice" within. If I have read more into your letter than you meant and have been guilty of any injustice to the people at the Ashram, you will not hesitate please to correct me.

I hope the two fasts have not overtaxed the body. I expect to hear from you again. Occasions for fasting may occur again and I may not be near you; in that case, and when you are feeling weak and exhausted, do not attempt to write yourself but ask

430. *LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI*

NANDI HILLS,
June 3, 1927

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

What a wonderful and poetic love letter you have sent me! I would wonder if my letter to Father crossed yours or whether this letter of yours is prompted by the reminder sent in my letter to Father. Not only must I not write much myself, but I must not even dictate for any length of time. I don't want therefore to chat with you long. But let me hasten to tell you that if you can be happy and comfortable in the Ashram, I would love to have you in spite of your not doing any work with your hands. Spinning by the hand is after all a test, an emblem, an earnest of what is within, and I know that you have all that substance within you. What does it matter that through no present fault of your own, you are simply physically incapable of spinning. The work done by the spirit within is infinitely precious, more precious than the formal spinning done by many without the heart in it. Come therefore when you like to the Ashram as your very home and I shall certainly take all that your voice can give me. But I should prize your presence even if you had not that rich melodious voice. What I prize is your goodness, which can act without speaking. It is like the fragrance of a sweet flower. It does not need any movement and yet the fragrance is all pervading and unmistakable, and it survives for a while even after the flower is withdrawn. How much longer must the fragrance of goodness last even after the body is withdrawn? But be absolutely sure that you will like the Ashram and that your body can sustain the Ashram life.

Do you write to Mira? If not, do please now. Her address is Bhagavadbhakti Ashram, Rampura, Rewari (Dt. Gurgaon).

With love to all.

Yours,
BAPU

MISS RAIHANA TYABJI
SOUTH WOOD
MUSSOORIE

From a photostat: S.N. 9602

432. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

NANDI HILLS,
June 3, 1927

DEAR DOCTOR,

Your letters are always interesting and instructive. Do I gather that you would prefer my giving up wheat-meal or oat-meal, salt, soda and vegetables altogether and confine myself to milk, water and fruit? Am I right in thinking that you consider raw milk better than boiled milk?

Yes, I well remember your talk about sterile eggs and their culture. I shall enquire here myself; but if you have any literature on the subject, I would like to study it. Without further consideration I am prepared to say that I would put sterile eggs, as you have described them to be, under the same category as milk. I am therefore open to receive further instruction about them and their culture.

You must some day try to convince me about the value of astrology; for, I do not deny the possibility of its being a true science. But I do not regard the investigation and use of every science as beneficial to mankind.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14145

433. LETTER TO GANGUBEHN

June 3, 1927

Brahmacharya, etc., can be practised only by an inner urge and by cultivating spiritual energy. This energy again can only be cultivated by constant application. There are two means of such application. One, discriminating and meditative study of good books, and two, efforts to practise the noble principles one has learnt. Learning without practice goes waste and serves only to turn one's head. Whatever therefore one has learnt one should immediately reduce to action. Therefore, a woman wanting to practise *brahmacharya* should take to non-violence, truth, non-possession, etc. She should thus zealously guard herself against the slightest untruth, against violence in thought, word or

vital fluid, although important, is only a bye-product. Its direct and primary objective is nothing less than communion with the *Brahman*. This is the only desirable and legitimate adventure on the path of *brahmacharya*. Why should a man take to the uphill task of conquering desires for the sake of *brahmacharya*, when manly adventures like vanquishing the enemy or undertaking foreign expeditions can be achieved by thousands of people without practising *brahmacharya*? And nobody does it, as I can vouchsafe from my fairly wide experience. Where can we find braver warriors than the German and the English soldiers? They are regularly provided with prostitutes. Hundreds, if not thousands, of innocent girls are sacrificed to the sexual hunger of these soldiers. No one despises these brave Kshatriyas who defend the country; on the other hand, educated and civilized men and women dote on these soldiers. I am not employing epithets like Kshatriyas, etc., on my own or to explain my meaning. In my view they are no warriors at all. I do not consider them defenders of the country. Dharma declines when we sing praises of these men. But under modern civilization there is nothing but praise for these people.

Now let us come to the Indian scene. Pathans, Sikhs and Gorkhas are the three acknowledged martial races. There is a similar provision of prostitutes for them as in the case of the German and other soldiers. They have an honoured place, you know, in the Empire. If you look at the ancient lores, adultery has been tolerated in the case of Kshatriyas. I write all this because I wish that the people should derive full benefit from your profound studies of the Vedas and other ancient scriptures. This will be possible by putting the scriptures in the crucible of modern conditions, by objective observation and intense churning. I can write a lot on this subject, but this should do to indicate to you the burden of my theme. Another reason for my brevity is that I have little energy. I have great respect for your learning and truthfulness, which has impelled me to write so much.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

437. *LETTER TO S. D. NADKARNI*[1]

NANDI HILLS,
June 4, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad that you are moving our friends on your side to open a local public temple[2] to the so-called untouchables. I hope that the forthcoming meeting will pass the contemplated resolution unanimously, and if they do, they will be doing justice more to themselves than to whom we have so long held under suppression. My opinion is our temples have been forsaken by God. Because of our ungodly treatment of a portion of our countrymen, God has made Himself untouchable, unapproachable and unseeable. God will re-enter our temples only when we have opened not merely our temples but our hearts to these fellow-countrymen and fellow-religionists.

Though your letter for *Young India* does not seem to me to rise to the height of some of the former communications you have been good enough to send me, I propose to publish it[3] as soon as I can, if only for the well-meaning and well-meant hits at me which I know are intended to travel far beyond me, in the hope that they will produce some impression.

I hope my message will be in time for the meeting. I got your letter only last evening and I am sending you the message by the return post.

Yours sincerely,

S. D. NADKARNI, ESQ.
KARWAR
(N. KANARA)

From a photostat: S.N. 14617

[1] In reply to a letter written on behalf of the workers of Karwar, seeking Gandhiji's opinion on the question of "untouchables and temple entry".

[2] To Vithoba

[3] Published under the caption "On Behalf of Untouchables", in *Young India*, 30-6-1927; *vide* also Vol. XXXIV, pp. 75-7.

439. LETTER TO SHARADABEHN KOTAK

June 4, 1927

What you write about the problem of thieves is quite right. My putting the question to you did not mean that I expected you to be able to find the solution immediately. It was intended to make all the women think. Men must do their duty of protecting women. But after all men's bodies are, like those of women, as brittle as glass bangles, though perhaps the male bangles are harder and can bear stronger blows. What women should do when those bangles are broken, is a question which they themselves should consider. There is the same *atman* in woman as in man. It is not affected by differences of caste, sex or country. The wide-awake *atman* in a heroic woman can be a thousand times more powerful than the slumbering *atman* in a wicked man. Hence, in the competition for displaying spiritual consciousness and strength of soul, all people—the maimed and the crippled, the strong and the weak, men and women, the old and the young and children—can participate on equal terms if they wish. Even a dense dark night obstructs only our natural eyes, but if we have developed divine eyes, what can a dense dark night or a long-handled sickle or a large baton do to us? And if, on such a dark night a giant of a man carrying a terrible weapon comes and stands before one of us—the others having either gone to sleep or been killed or run away—if at that time we do not remember the name of Rama, then our having chanted it morning and evening will have been in vain. It is in the hope that it may come to us at such a dreadful time and help us that we unfailingly repeat Ramanama morning and evening even though we may feel lazy, or be tired or sleepy. It is possible that after long practice, that name will come to our lips spontaneously every time we need it, will even be engraved in our hearts.

The women of the Raniparaj community are certainly more fearless than we. They will go anywhere during night time. They do not depend on being protected by men. It is, however, true that they have other fears, but my statement is only about fear of thieves and the like. It is not true to say that the Raniparaj women do not care about their chastity. It is not proper either, to believe that only those who care for their *chastity* are afraid. The fear which afflicts us in the Ashram has nothing to do with outrage of modesty. If we take count of cases of rape in the world,

441. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

NANDI DURG, MYSORE,
[Before *June 5, 1927*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

Your letter to hand. I am steadily improving. There is no cause for worry. You did right in informing me of the death of Shankarrao's son. I have sent a letter of consolation to him and his wife. What can I write to bring you peace of mind? Let us believe that the one aim of our life is to control our senses; it is the highest human achievement and therefore attainable with difficulty. By constant effort we can conquer our passions. You should be engaged in some noble work, mentally as well as physically. Only when the mind is uncontrolled does it fall a prey to passion. Why not make a painstaking study of the *Gita*? And why not learn Sanskrit to understand the original work? When you have not got to be at the shop or when you have to be there and have nothing to do, why not ply the charkha or the *takli*? Just as man cuts through solid mountains with persistent effort, so can he cut through the barrier of passion. Therefore you should always be diligent.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 205

442. "SWEET MUSIC IN SPINNING-WHEEL"

I have published this article[2] as I have received it. It is one of those received in response to the public request, made by Shri Karsandas Chitaliya, for articles on the spinning-wheel. He gave me last year the one which he had considered to be the best and preserved. I had intended to publish it on some occasion and I do so now.

This article is dated September 21, 1921. Those days were different from these. In the intoxicating atmosphere of that age,

[1] Gandhiji descended from Nandi Hills to Bangalore on June 5, 1927.
[2] Not translated here

ed to produce slaves, and had broken away from it with great difficulty. They gave whatever help they could and then dropped out. The existing national schools must first show their inner strength and brilliance before national education can march further ahead, and I am sure they could do it if they are going to last. Government schools do not impart an education calculated to make the students independent; yet they exist because they have blinded our vision with their dazzle. Besides, they hold out for some students the lure of lucrative jobs carrying four to five hundred rupees a month at the end of their studies. And the students think as they do about a lottery: "One of us is surely going to win the prize. Who knows, I may be that lucky one!" National education does not hold out any such allurement.

Let us now examine the suggestion made by the correspondent. It is true that agriculture occupies a place of importance in our economic life. But it has not disappeared; it is still there. We have got to revive it. There is in it scope for improvement. But improving agriculture is beyond the capacity of those who are engaged in national education. We can do nothing to improve it without the help of the State. It will need lakhs of rupees which will have to be spent merely on the preliminary experiments. I am sure that this cannot be done without swaraj, for Government laws relating to agriculture should be in accord with the economic conditions of the country. There should be model farms at numerous places throughout the country for the dissemination of agricultural knowledge and the peasants and farmers should be provided various facilities to enable them to do their work more efficiently. All these things are lacking today in India. But in South Africa, Australia and other countries where there are popular Governments wedded to the welfare of the people, the peasants do enjoy all these advantages. Therefore, the next best thing—which the national educationists have—is the charkha, as is admitted by the above correspondent. And the institutions which have adopted charkha as the medium of national education can accommodate all the youths wishing to go in for national education, and can train them to become self-reliant. But their knowledge of the charkha must be both comprehensive and scientific. Such youths are being trained gradually, and as the movement for khadi advances national education will also expand and extend over a larger and larger field.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 5-6-1927

(c) Have you or any other Ayurvedic physician investigated the meaning of or tested the prescriptions contained in *hridroga shweta kushta-nashan sukta—kushta-nashan sukta—suktas* reproduced in the current number of the *Vaidika Dharma* edited by Pandit Satavalekar of Oundh? If you have not the magazine, I shall be glad to send it to you.

Yours sincerely,

DR. GANGADHAR SHASTRI JOSHI
TILAK MAHAVIDYALAYA
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 14147

446. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Jeth Sud 6 [June 5, 1927]

DEAR SISTERS,

Your letter.

I have come down to Bangalore today and am not fatigued. Doctors examined me; they say that I shall be all right within a month's time.

What Ramaniklalbhai says is quite true. There are many books that are worth reading. Let him choose what he likes. After all everything depends upon the interest that one who reads to others can create in his listeners. None of you should pass over any portion of the book which you do not understand. You should ask for the meaning again and again, if necessary, till you understand it. Many other things besides become clear if you understand even one thing thoroughly. I like the bangles made by Manibehn Patel out of khadi cloth. I have suggested that the bangles should be made, not of khaddar, but of yarn. The *raksha*[1] is also a kind of bangle and it is always made of yarn. One can put as much art and colour into a yarn bangle as one likes. And I am sure that the innocent pleasure one gets from wearing a thing prepared with careful art by one's own hand can never be had by putting on even a jewel-studded bangle costing thousands of rupees.

[1] Thread that a sister ties round the wrist of her brother on Coconut Day

448. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, BANGALORE[1]

[After *June 5, 1927*]

Ever since our arrival, a number of people have been gathering here every evening to take part in our evening prayers . . . and one evening at the close of the prayer, Gandhiji had to address them a few words of appeal and advice. He said:

I want you to be patient with me. That is to say, you will not crowd round me or follow me when I go out for my evening walk. I am a patient and I have yet to recover my voice. I have yet to recover my strength and I have come here to rest myself. After I get better I hope to do what little service I can to the people of Mysore. You will therefore give me all the rest I need and not disturb my quiet walks. This is so far as I am concerned. As for you, I may say that all of you, no matter to what faith you belong, are welcome to take part in the prayer. But there are one or two conditions. The first is that you should come with a prayerful mind, a prayerful heart and a prayerful attitude. Everyone—Hindu, Muslim, Christian, no matter to what faith he belongs—can participate in the prayer. After the repetition of the verses is done, we chant *Raghupati Raghava Rajaram, Patitapavana Sitaram*, in which all who have a voice may join, so that our prayer may gather volume, and please God if there is a God who listens to our prayers. There is another condition. You know what *Patita Pavana Sitaram* means. We pray to God who saves the fallen and the downtrodden. I would therefore ask you to come in khadi, for khadi links you with the fallen and the downtrodden. As a visible token of your desire to help them I ask you all—men, women and children, young and old, of whatever faith—to come dressed in khadi. That is the least little that you can do to be fit to repeat the prayer:

Raghupati Raghava Rajaram
Patitapavana Sitaram

It is a prayer in which everyone may join, not only the Hindus but Muslims, Christians and others, for it is an invocation not to a king, but the King of kings, the God of gods, whom we all adore.

Young India, 16-6-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

my comfort, the blood-pressure had not increased at all nor did I notice any other effect of the strain. The doctors came yesterday and they said I should be quite all right in a month's time and able to do the ordinary touring though not at breakneck speed.

I have already given the address here—Kumara Park, Bangalore City.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Just as I was closing this I got your wire. I was prepared for it. I have wired[1] saying that subject to Jamnalalji's opinion you should go with Valunjker and Gangu to Sabarmati and learn Hindi with Valunjker, pending other arrangement. Now that Gangu is attached to you so much, I want you to keep her under your wings so long as it is necessary. There are several other places I have mentioned to you already but I am not in a hurry to come to a decision. If Valunjker and Gangu are not to be with you, it might be as well for you to pass a few days with me before settling down anywhere else for finishing your Hindi. You may have acquired enough confidence now to finish your Hindi even at the Ashram. What in my opinion you need is someone who would talk to you in Hindi only. But I shall be largely guided by your instinct.

You are having the richest experiences of your life. Turn to verse 9 of the 6th chapter, *Gita*:

"The equiminded one is the same to the good as well as evil. . . ."[2] We have to love them all in spite of the sad discoveries. But love and equal treatment are expressed and can be expressed only in service. 'You are bad but I love you just as when I thought you were good.' Life's work is summed up in attaining that state.

Rock of ages cleft for me
Let me hide myself in Thee.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5234. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] As in the source

upkeep of the Bishop of London with his palace. I remember also the sensation that was created when the Bishop came out with his balance-sheet in which he showed on the expenditure side the cost of liveried servants, a carriage in pair, etc., which he justified because he had to move among and affect the lives of lords and kings. If I recollect rightly, this publication of the balance-sheet and the defence exposed the Bishop to further ridicule. Imagine Jesus wearing robes resplendent with diamonds and pearls and holding dinners served in golden plates with the choicest old wines and viands with a view to comforting epicures and millionaires of his age. But I must stop here. I think I have given you enough tonic for steadying your nerves and refreshing you.

Though I seem to be on the road to recovery, the head still remains silly and becomes refractory under the slightest pressure. However, I pray and grin and bear it. He gave me all the needed strength for all these years. He might humble my pride by reducing me to helplessness.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 12347

452. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BANGALORE CITY,
June 6, 1927

CHI. MANILAL AND CHI. SUSHILA,

So far your letters have been coming regularly. It would be good if you kept this up.

This letter should go to you by the same steamer by which Sastriji arrives there.

The translation of the *Gita* is now proceeding five times faster, so that you will now have a lot of feeding. You should both ask me whatever you do not understand.

My health continues to improve. I arrived in Bangalore yesterday. Nandi is now too cold for me. I shall be here for a month at least. Thereafter, I hope, I shall get to move about a little. Look after Sastriji.

If Sushila learns type-composing and if God keeps her well she will be of much help to you. I too wish she should be.

If you earnestly study each and every problem there, you will acquire the knowledge that I expect of you.

455. LETTER TO RUSTOMJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE CITY,
June 7, 1927

BHAISHRI RUSTOMJI,

Your letter of the 3rd I got today. And it is just today that I learn from the papers that Manchershah has been sentenced to four years and that he has not yet given up his fast. Bhai Manchershah is a very good boy and also a very stubborn one. He does not listen to me as to you. When I was in Nagpur last, I had a long talk with him. I had asked him not to be impatient, but I found he was the type who would listen to none. Parents must give up all hopes of [controlling] their children when the latter grow up. Everyone acts in accordance with his karma. Parents should speak to their grown-up children as to friends and if the latter pay no heed they should keep quiet. I too have grown-up sons. I put up with the fact that my eldest son does not listen to me nor do I grieve over it. I write this hoping it would console you. I am sorry I can do nothing more than asking you to keep your peace. Why do you think yourself helpless? One who trusts in God is not helpless, one who relies on man is truly helpless.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12820

456. A LETTER

[Before *June 8, 1927*][1]

Yours is not pure love. The woman is married. If you wish to serve that woman and her husband in any way, you must give up every connection with her. If, for that purpose, you have to leave Broach, you should do that too. It is your moral duty to do so. If you save yourself from the *adharma* that is now being widely practised in the name of love, you will earn admiration for your great courage.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The source contains this letter before the entries for June 8, 1927.

a lot from her. Now the question is where these people should go. If Gangubehn has not to stay with her, Mirabehn might wish to go with me for some time. Thus she may have a little more peace of mind and to some extent devote herself to her studies. But if you too think that she should stay with Gangubehn and others, at the moment I can think of only Sabarmati or Wardha. Consider any other idea that you may have.

My health continues to improve.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10605

459. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 8, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letters and telegram. I remain unperturbed. We have simply to deal with this corruption as a surgeon deals with eruptions which are symptomatical of some deep-seated internal disease. I have written separately to Jamnalalji. I did feel that your letters were being tampered with. But I considered that also to be good because, if they have disturbed your outgoing and incoming post, they have learnt something from it.

I have suggested to Jamnalalji that even though the principal parties have gone, you should continue your investigations and probe the disease to its source. There may be some simple folks who are mere dupes. If their eyes can be opened, you should open them, and they should be advised to leave the Ashram not upon some pretext or another but upon the clearest possible statement of the discovery of corruption. And, in whatever you do, let Jamnalalji's be the final judgement. He is shrewd, penetrating, fearless and just; and he has greater experience than you have of that institution and of men and things in general in India. So it is wise to be guided by his judgement.

If it is finally decided that you should leave at once, I can only think of Sabarmati or Wardha, if you have Valunjker and Gangubehn with you. After your last letter I feel more and more that Gangubehn should not be torn from you. Whether it is an institution or whether it is an individual, we have the same code of conduct. She requires the same care and attention as the whole problem of swaraj would, provided that it becomes the clear duty for the moment to attend to the individual, and it

461. LETTER TO BASIL MATHEWS

As at the Ashram, Sabarmati,[1]
June 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. K. T. Paul has just handed your letter personally to me.

Here is my answer to your enquiry[2]:

TRUTH and LOVE have been jointly the guiding principle of my life. If God who is indefinable can be at all defined, then I should say that God is TRUTH. It is impossible to reach HIM, that is, TRUTH, except through LOVE. LOVE can only be expressed fully when man reduces himself to a cipher. This process of reduction to cipher is the highest effort man or woman is capable of making. It is the only effort worth making, and it is possible only through ever-increasing self-restraint.

Ever at youth's service,

BASIL MATHEWS, ESQ.,
EDITOR, "WORLD'S YOUTH"
3, RUE GENERAL DUFOUR
GENEVA

From a photostat: S.N. 12514

462. LETTER TO HENRY A. ATKINSON

As at Satyagraha Ashram,[3]
Sabarmati (India),
June 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. K. T. Paul was able only yesterday to hand me personally your letter of 5th September last. He told me that you were likely to visit India during the cold weather this year. If so, I might have the pleasure of being able to discuss your proposal more fully when we meet. At present, I shall only say that the

[1] Permanent address

[2] *Vide* Appendix VI.

[3] Permanent address

464. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt reply. I shall try to increase the quantity of butter.

The *pranayama* causes no difficulty, and as a rule, I take all the deep breath without a break.

I did not notice the effects you ascribed to *savasana.* May it not be that the prescribed period is too short, that is two minutes? I did feel refreshed when I used to lie flat on my back for nearly 15 minutes.

Nor did I notice any positive effect of *sarvangasana.* Would you advise increasing the angle or increasing the period for the pose at the present angle?

I forgot to mention the massage. It has been continued without interruption. But the abdominal and heart massage has been omitted for some time. The abdominal was omitted for fear that continued massage might weaken the intestinal muscles and may render it a habit always to have that massage for inducing proper motion. The heart massage I left off feeling it to be unnecessary arguing to myself, perhaps wrongly, that the massage could not possibly reach the heart which is floating in a solid case of ribs and flesh. Now that you have thought of the massage and specifically mentioned the abdominal and the heart, I shall resume the massage. But in your next letter, you will please give me your answer to my doubt.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMAT KUVALAYANANDJI
KUNJAVANA
LONAVLA

From a photostat: S.N. 12592

I can understand how, during illness, you felt the wicked passion crystallized into an image and later the divine power too appeared similarly. But it should be realized that both are mental projections. And true dharma consists in not even expecting such an experience. Divine revelation is not a miracle but the reward of *tapascharya* and the endless spiritual joy that this experience brings is the real truth. All else is unreal. And this is the true meaning of disinterested service. When in trouble one need not give one's prayer to be saved from pain, yet it is certainly no better than patiently enduring the pain. Indeed, why should we desire happiness? When pain comes or happiness, it should all be the same to us. We should not strive for happiness nor furnish the trappings of pain. In all cirsumstances we should do our duty as we see it from time to time.

I hope you got my earlier letter. The help received from the Maharaja and the other officials is a matter of satisfaction.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6530

467. NOTE

KHADDAR WORK IN NELLORE DISTRICT

Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya sends the following[1] remarkable notes about the progress of khadi in the Nellore District of Andhra. There is much in the notes which can be copied by every municipality and other khadi associations.

Young India, 9-6-1927

468. ASHRAM TANNERY

It is possible for me now to inform readers that they can get from the Sabarmati Satyagraha Ashram Tannery Department well-prepared dead-cattle hide. Sandals, belts and such other things are already being made but not yet in quantities large enough for executing all the orders that may be received. But it is possible now to meet a fair demand for prepared dead-cattle hide in three colours, black, dark-brown and yellow, and two

[1] Not reproduced here

minority. Numerical strength savours of violence when it acts in total disregard of any strongly-felt opinion of a minority. The rule of majority is perfectly sound, only where there is no rigid insistence on the part of the dissenters upon their dissent, and where there is on their behalf a sportsmanlike obedience to the opinion of the majority. No organization can run smoothly when it is divided into camps, each growling at the other and each determined to have its own way by hook or by crook. I had therefore no hesitation in telling the President, that he should assist the removal of the clause about khadi if that clause could not gain willing submission from the minority.

This, however, is totally different from the question of my opinion. Any appeal to me to change my opinion, as has been done so often before, would be, to say the least, unfair to me. I must be allowed to retain my opinion as to the khadi clause or as to the method of running the Congress organization. All I can say is that my opinion should have no greater weight than the opinion of any other member of the Congress. My own opinion is emphatically that it will be wrong for the Congress, if it is to have an organic connection with the starving millions, to break this one and only bond between the classes and the masses. But I know that there is another school of thought in our country which rejects khadi as any token of a bond between the classes and the masses, and regards it as a mere *mahatmaic* freak or fad. That school is entitled to the same respect for its opinion as I venture to claim for my own. The President and the other members of the Congress have really to decide the question upon its merits, and ask themselves what is good for the Congress and fearlessly decide accordingly.

After all khadi is a force to be reckoned with, if it has come to stay. If it has staunch, true and self-sacrificing workers to back it, and if it has intrinsic value, it will prosper even though the Congress should in its wisdom give it up as part of the franchise, or even give it up altogether. The Congress will be the first to recognize anything that becomes a living force in the country. It may legitimately ignore it till it has proved its vitality. There may be and there are no doubt many things which are good in themselves. But a vast popular organization like the Congress cannot possibly take up things merely because they are good. It can only take up things that are good, provided they have popular backing. Without such backing the Congress would cease to be representative of the people and would merely represent a body of reformers or faddists.

> along with elocution competitions they will, it is hoped, make the Conference more interesting. Nor have we eliminated drama and music from our programme. . . . Pieces in Urdu and English will also be staged.

I have not omitted a single operative sentence that would give one an idea of what the Conference was expected to do, and yet one fails to find a single reference to things of permanent interest to the student world. I have no doubt that the dramatic and musical and gymnastic performances were all provided on a "grand scale". I take the phrase in inverted commas from the circular. I have no doubt also that the Conference had attractive papers on female education. But so far as the circular is concerned, there is no mention of the disgraceful *deti-leti* (dowry) practices, from which the students have not freed themselves and which in many respects makes the lives of Sindhi girls a hell upon earth and of parents of daughters a torture. There is nothing in the circular to show that the Conference intended to tackle the question of the morals of the students. Nor is there anything to show that the Conference was to do anything to show the students the way to become fearless nation-builders. It is a matter of no small credit to Sind that it is supplying so many institutions with brilliant professors, but more is always expected from those who give much. And I, who have every reason to be grateful to Sindhi friends for giving me fine co-workers for the Gujarat Vidyapith, am not going to be satisfied with getting professors and khadi workers. Sind has got its Sadhu Vasvani. It can boast of a number of great reformers. But the students will put themselves in the wrong, if they will be contented with appropriation of the merit gained by the sadhus and reformers of Sind. They have got to become nation-builders. The base imitation of the West, the ability to speak and write correct and polished English, will not add one brick to the temple of freedom. The student world, which is receiving an education far too expensive for starving India and an education which only a microscopic minority can ever hope to receive, is expected to qualify itself for it by giving its life-blood to the nation. Students must become pioneers in conservative reform, conserving all that is good in the nation and fearlessly ridding society of the innumerable abuses that have crept into it.

These conferences should open the eyes of students to the realities before them. They should result in making them think of things which, in the class-room adapted to its foreign setting, they do not get an opportunity of learning. They may not be able in these conferences to discuss questions regarded as purely political. But they can and they must study and discuss social

to be carefully organized and gradually trained into the best ways of handling the stuff.

In a very short time, such a farm would become wonderfully productive in either grain, cattle-fodder, fruit or certain kinds of vegetables, all of which could be sold in the same locality, thus avoiding transportation charges in the marketing and yielding a fair profit for the further development of the scheme or the education and betterment of the whole sweeper community of the city or district. Such use of the night-soil would be an enormous saving of very valuable manurial material which is now not only almost entirely wasted, I believe, but a source of much illness and consequent economic loss to the entire community, through the breeding of flies and the carrying of all sorts of germs and filth.

Mr. Gregg then continues:[1]

Young India, 9-6-1927

472. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 9, 1927

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

This is the fourth letter I am writing to you after your departure from Bombay. Jamnalalji has sent me your cablegram. Hence this letter in English. I must not yet try to write letters myself. In order to conserve my energy, therefore, I am dictating most of my correspondence, whether in English, Hindi or Gujarati.

Malaviyaji is with me today. He is on his way to Ooty to recoup himself. He came this morning and was to have left this evening; but on my telling him that the day after tomorrow is the Mysore Maharaja's birthday and suggesting that he should go to Mysore to give his blessings before proceeding to Ooty, he has sent a telegram to the Dewan. He has suspended his journey forward and will probably leave for Mysore tomorrow. Of course, I have been in regular correspondence with him and he has been replying by wires. He is looking much pulled down, but he is as hopeful as ever about everything. There is nothing wrong with his body. It is simply weakness caused by ceaseless wear and tear. He promises to take about a month's rest in Ooty. He

[1] Not reproduced here

I hope you got the book I sent to you on *Food and Health.* I descended to Bangalore on Sunday last and I am feeling better. I am taking more food. The tour will begin with Mysore, which itself will take perhaps a fortnight. And Mysore is a big plateau, 3,000 ft. high, therefore the climate throughout the Mysore State is very moderate.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1573

474. LETTER TO M. K. SAHASRABUDDHI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 9, 1927

MY DEAR SAHASRABUDDHI,

Your postcard addressed to Sabarmati was redirected here and received by me only yesterday. I remember you well and I did talk about you to Narmada, when I was in Alibagh. But I do not remember having suggested to anybody that you should leave your studies and join the Ashram at Sabarmati. I do not know how Narmada or anybody else could possibly have gathered the impression that I want you to give up your studies. But now that you have written to me, which I did not want you to do, so that I could know you better, please let me know what you are studying at present and what you propose to do after your studies are finished.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. SAHASRABUDDHI, ESQ.
KALAMBA ROAD, ALIBAGH (DISTRICT, COLABA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 14148

You are quite right in having the impression that I have never before reserved copyright in any of my writings. But Mr. Holmes induced me to depart from the rule on the ground that without the transfer of the copyright, no European publishing house would care to publish the Autobiography and that its publication might be of some little assistance in the West.

I thank you for your enquiry about myself. I am making steady progress and am permitted by the doctors to attend to a moderate amount of correspondence, etc.

Yours sincerely,

S. T. SHEPPARD, ESQ.
"THE TIMES OF INDIA" OFFICE
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12808

478. LETTER TO H. CLAYTON

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

DEAR MR. CLAYTON,

I thank you for your letter of the 6th June.

I note the care with which you seem to have gone into the allegations. I hope to write further as soon as I have heard from Mr. Thakkar.

I shall take care to prevent publication of any portion of the minutes of the Committee meeting referred to in your letter and of which you have favoured me with a copy.

Yours sincerely,

H. CLAYTON, ESQ.
COMMISSIONER,
MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12913

480. LETTER TO MANAGER, AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

DEAR SIR,

I understand from a friend that your mission knows a method whereby poultry can be so bred as to yield eggs that are sterile from the commencement of their being laid. I have never known this. But as my informant is a medical man and insistent upon the accuracy of the statement made by him, I ask you to enlighten me if you will.

Yours faithfully,

THE MANAGER
THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION
SANGLI

From a photostat: S.N. 14149

481. LETTER TO J. BHIMA RAO

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you will read the columns of *Young India* you will find that the reference to Sir M. Vishveshwarayya's administration as *Ramarajya* is a joke and that tribute to the Chief of Savantwadi is a personal tribute. I do not see how on the strength of the acknowledgement of the undoubted good qualities of one Chief, princes can possibly sustain misrule or justify the principle of absolute autocracy. I do not therefore think that the point you have raised requires an elucidation in the pages of *Young India.*

Yours sincerely,

J. BHIMA RAO, ESQ.
THE SWADESHI PERFUMERY WORKS
JAMKHANDI HOUSE
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14150

But if he posed as philanthropist and not merely as a business man bent upon making some money for himself and his principals, he would immediately put himself in the wrong.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. SUBRAMANIAM
SUN LIFE ASSURANCE CO. OF CANADA
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 14152

484. LETTER TO GOPALDAS

BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

BHAI GOPALDASJI,

I have your letter. To me restricted widow-marriage is a question of compassion. Corruption is to be found even where widows remarry—as amongst us—but this is an irrelevant point. The point to be considered is this: Is it right to impose upon woman a restriction which man would not accept for himself? A girl who does not understand the meaning of marriage is married off and later loses her so-called husband. Can such a girl be called a widow? All such questions relating to the plight of widows are a matter of dharma, of compassion and while solving them we should not call up and confront the conditions obtaining in some other countries, but consider only what our dharma points to. Looking at it from this angle, I think that it is the duty of the Hindu society to get all child-widows married.

Yours,

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12821

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5240. Courtesy: Mirabehn

486. LETTER TO SATCOWRIPATI RAY

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 12, 1927

DEAR SATCOWRI BABU,

I have your long and full letter. Please do not apologize. If I cannot render concrete service, I can at least give you the consolation of a friend whose whole heart is with you in your trouble. I shall treasure the detailed information you have given me for future use if chance throws itself my way. But I shall be unable to raise for you the sum you need to tide over your difficulty. Meanwhile I would advise you strongly to concentrate your attention upon building up your practice. I see no way out of it just at present. I know it is bad; but we do not always get things that we like or that are good. Practice evidently is just now your *swadharma*[1], and therefore the best for you. But will you not make up your mind that no matter how much practice you get, you will no longer spend on marriages? Whether it will come in my life or not, the time is coming when men like you will have again to give up practice, give up hearth and home and plunge into the struggle for liberty. Let this practice therefore be a trust for you. But you and your family should live as the poorest of our people, and therefore you should bring up your daughters now to grow up without thinking of marriage, and when they are to be married, they are to be married without any expense whatsoever. Do you know that during the past two years, I have been helping to marry several couples without the expense of even Rs. 10 you might say. Two of these were my relations, one my son, another my grand-daughter. The others were daughters or sons of friends and co-workers, all having lived before like you and me. In order to hearten you, I must mention them. Vallabhbhai was a barrister with a first-class practice. His son was married the other day at the Ashram with nothing but the simple religious ceremony. No dinner was given and not one single piece of ornament was given to the bride.

[1] One's own duty

Lastly, if at all you feel like it, do come down to Bangalore where I am yet to rest up to the end of the month and pass a few days with me.

I note what you say about Subhas Bose. I am following him as closely as I can through the papers. If you see him, please tell him that I often think of him. I did send him a telegram immediately on his release. I am anxious to know whether he got it. I don't want any reply from him. I simply mention this as you have been good enough to volunteer news about him which I appreciate.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12587

487. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

BANGALORE,
Jyaishtha Shukla 13 [June 12, 1927][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letter to hand. Diligence should not be taken to mean working beyond one's strength; it only means keeping the body and the mind constantly occupied with such work as they can normally cope with. An irregularity about bowel movement is hard to bear. There is no doubt fasting is the first remedy for it. But this treatment should be attempted only under the supervision of someone who knows about it. If you wish to be treated I shall see if I can send you to one or two friends who offer this treatment. You must not be lethargic about this matter. So write to me soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 203

[1] Inferred from the contents; *vide* also "Letter to Rameshwar das Poddar", before 5-6-1927.

489. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 14, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Day before yesterday I passed through the Imperial Dairy and some students showed me some of your beautiful animals. I had the pleasure of knowing about you and your interest in cattle through Sir Harold Mann's communications. You may be aware that I am deeply interested in the cattle problem and therefore in cattle-breeding, dairying, tanning, etc. And whilst I am convalescing and have to be in Bangalore yet for a fortnight, I would like to visit the dairy every day if my health permits and pass there about half an hour learning all that can be learnt during that time. I wonder if it is possible for you to instruct someone in charge to give me the assistance I need and which I should value. I would esteem too any literature that you can provide me with and that you think I should read. I have already initiated through experts supplied to me by Sir Harold Mann a dairying experiment at Sabarmati. I would value too the privilege of a talk with you on this subject if you can spare the time for me. I know you are an almost next-door neighbour. I have often passed by your bungalow on my strolls. I am allowed to see visitors between 3 and half-past four, and if you are at home during that time, any day, I should do myself the honour of calling to see you.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ.
IMPERIAL DAIRY EXPERT
BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 12916

492. *LETTER TO J. FRIEND LODGE*

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I send you the autograph herewith. The name of the photographer is Mahulikar, Ritchie Road, Ahmedabad.

Yours sincerely,

J. FRIEND LODGE, ESQ.
'SUNSET'
BUSTLETON
PHILA.

From a photostat: S.N. 12520

493. *LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA*

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 15, 1927

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

I have your letter. Your fear may give place to the confidence that the notice sent by you about the Vidyapith will be published in *Young India.*

One cheque that I received some days ago was already acknowledged. I wrote to you on 26th May. Did you send any cheque after?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SRI PRAKASA
SEVASHRAM
BENARES CANTT.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14153

So far as the Rs. 12,500 are concerned, I am afraid, we shall not get them unless Kasturbhai, who is insistent even to the extent of demanding his own quota back, as he might well do, invites the other donors to do likewise. So far, therefore, as these funds are concerned, the way to work lies in that direction. The ultimate decision will be taken by the mill-owners on side issues and on personal likes and dislikes. These aberrations we shall always have with us and we must suffer them with becoming calmness.

But the more important point for consideration is the principle which should guide us in our relations with the mill-owners, or, more generally speaking, capitalists. At the present moment, we shall do well to be satisfied with doing the right without expecting reciprocity and therefore without expecting any pecuniary help from the capitalists. Inch by inch labour will have to make its position good and better its conditions independently of outside support. The outside support may be divided into two parts: from the capitalists directly concerned, in this instance, therefore the mill-owners, and secondly, from the general sympathetic public. The second support we shall get more quickly and without in any way endangering our interests. The support from capitalists directly concerned will come when labour has vindicated itself and has almost attained the position of being able to dictate its own terms. It will be then and not till then that we shall get willing help from capital. If my diagnosis is correct, we must then so order our affairs as to undertake just such work as we can do irrespective of outside assistance. When its needs are to be supplemented, we should go to the independent outsiders and never go to the interested outsiders; but we do not need to refuse the help from the last source when it comes voluntarily. And we must always be able to so shape our course as to *feel* independent of all outside help. Our concentration therefore must be in educating labour from within and out of means chiefly supplied by labour itself. This, in my opinion, is the shortest and the simplest way of serving labour. It will undoubtedly cause in the initial stages great difficulty, great embarrassment and labour itself will be irresponsive. But that is the very reason why we should persist in what we know to be the best course. Any other way, labour becomes pauperized and demoralized as one sees happening all over India. Applying the principle to the present case, my solution would be to carry on such negotiations with the mill-owners as may be consistent with the dignity and self-respect, but to be prepared to do without the assistance that is being received now. You must

497. *LETTER TO SECRETARY, A.I.S.A.*

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 15, 1927

I have your letter. I have gone through the agenda. I cannot think of any addition. The agenda seems to me to be exhaustive.

The draft rules for agencies seem to me to be quite good. I cannot think of any improvement just now. I do not want to concentrate upon the work and tax my brain. But they read all right. If anything arising out of them is referred to me at the meeting in any definite form, I shall be able to give my opinion. It will be premature to ask the several khadi centres to communicate with the Central office only through the respective agencies. That would be an ideal to be reached but after we are better organized and the necessity for acting through agencies is generally recognized.

At the present moment we are trying to evolve organized order out of disorganized work. We have therefore to act after the style of a family in which the *paterfamilias* is referred to by the respective members without any intervention. But in order to establish the custom of dealing through agencies, we may refer all the communications we received to the agents wherever necessary and we may also refer all new correspondence to the agents. And thirdly we may ask the agents to interest themselves in the several centres in their jurisdiction even though they may not be invited by respective centres. The agents may thus create between the centres and themselves a living bond so that instead of referring to head office, the centres will of their own accord refer to the agents. We may for the moment frustrate the end we have in view, if we impose the condition from above. Also wherever any centre is recalcitrant and is causing trouble and insists upon dealing with the head office or not at all, we may impose the condition of coming through the agent.

As to the Council, I suggest the following without having given much thought to the thing:

The Council should meet quarterly. At least a week's clear notice should be received by every member. The week to count from the date of each member receiving notice at his registered address. The agenda should contain just the items to be considered and where, in the opinion of the Secretary, papers are

ADDENDA

1. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Sunday [On or before *March 27*][1] *1927*

CHI. MANI,

I have been waiting for your letter. I know you have been deliberately refraining from writing. But now there is no need for it. How far have you progressed in Sanskrit? And would you now be ranked first in carding and spinning?

No news from Karachi. How is your health?

I am improving every day. There is no cause for anxiety.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 54-5

2. LETTER TO SURENDRA

Wednesday [*April 13, 1927*][2]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter. If you get leave thence do go to Nathji and to Wardha. Undoubtedly the study of hygiene is most essential. This would include *asanas* and breath-control which, I think, would need a guide. I would like you to practise them. Nathji has some experience in this field. He does not seem to have much faith in it. Having discussed it with a few people I was led to believe that *asanas*, etc., were of no avail in curing the sick. I have not personally reached this conclusion. If you want to learn them I would send you to Pandit Satavalekar. There is a swami in Hardwar who also has promised to train an ashramite if one goes to him. I have not met him though Mahadev has. Nowhere have I found the purity that I would

1 From the reference to Sanskrit, spinning, carding and khadi; *vide* "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 28-3-1927.

2 From the reference to sending the addressee to S. D. Satavalekar; *vide* "Letter to S. D. Satavalekar", 14-4-1927, where Gandhiji says: "I shall try and send you a good student."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

EXTRACTS FROM SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA'S OPEN LETTER

DEAR COMRADE GANDHI,

We are both erratic enough to permit each other to be rude in order to freely express oneself correctly instead of getting lost in artificiality of phraseology. . . .

During my conversation with you at certain periods you did not seem to take a definite attitude with regard to the value of organization of labour and peasants. You emphatically argued that the charkha movement was making organization. I emphatically deny it. . . . For centuries together, millions of men and women in India have been boiling rice, utilizing similar quantities of rice and water and conducting cooking operations. . . . All these operations surely have not produced any organization and the work of spinning can never do so any more than the work of cooking. . . .

Before 1900, leaders who . . . worked to build up hopes of salvation . . . were popular leaders as Gladstone was to the British, Bismarck to the Germans, or Parnell to the Irish or Dadabhai or Pherozeshah and Surendranath to the Indians. By the year 1900 the masses of men got tired and sick and their hearts began to burn with fire. The change came on very rapidly and universally and only such individuals as expressed the burning fire of the heart and the revolt of the suffering human beings were taken as leaders. The first task of these was to express boldly and fearlessly the unexpressed voice of the people. The second task of these leaders was . . . to make it absolutely impossible for the old order to continue to function. The third task was to reconstruct and arduously and slowly to build up a new life. Ireland produced a De Valera. He did No. 1 and 2 and his people are now bravely carrying on his task No. 3. Russia has produced Lenin. He did No. 1 and 2 and though his life was short, he led his people on the right path regarding No. 3. Turkey produced Kemal. He did No. 1 and 2 and is fortunate enough to be kicking and vigorous to carry on his task No. 3. China produced Sun-Yat-Sen. He completed No. 1 and 2 and after his death his well-organized and well-disciplined followers are carrying on task No. 3. In Italy, though in contrary direction, Mussolini plays the same individual part, India at that moment announced to the world her leader to be Gandhi. You performed No. 1 but you abandoned task No. 2 and so task No. 3 is out of the question and we are so overwhelmed with the disastrous defect at the second stage of your struggle that our lot today is harder than before. . . .

APPENDIX II

SHRADDHANAND MEMORIAL

An appeal signed by Pandit Malaviyaji and Lala Lajpat Rai says:

It is decided that, except the appeal for 2½ lakhs for the Gurukul Kangri which had already been issued by the Punjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, only one appeal should be issued on behalf of the Hindu community as a whole for Rs. 10 lakhs, 5 lakhs of which should be kept as a permanent endowment and 5 lakhs should be used immediately as follows: 1½ lakhs for the uplift of the depressed classes (*achhutoddhar*); 1¾ for carrying on the work of *shuddhi* and 1¾ for promoting Hindu *sangathan*. The Trustees shall select such agencies of the Hindu Mahasabha, Sanatan Dharma Sabha and the Arya Samaj, including the Bharatiya Shuddhi Sabha and the Dalitoddhar Sabha of Delhi to carry out the objects of the Trust as they may consider fit from time to time, subject to such general conditions for the submission and audit of accounts as they may lay down; but the work of *sangathan* shall be carried out through the Hindu Mahasabha alone. The interest of the five lakhs of the permanent fund will also be spent on the three objects named above in the proportion stated. It has also been decided that at least half the total amount raised in a province shall be spent within that province, and this applies to the interest of the permanent endowment fund also.

It has been also resolved that steps be taken to acquire the house in which Swami Shraddhanandji was murdered with the object of converting it into Swami Shraddhanand Memorial Bhavan.

Every donor is free to earmark his donation for any of the purposes named above. The donations will be strictly used for that purpose or purposes only for which a donor has given it.

All donations should be remitted to the Manager, The Punjab National Bank Ltd., Delhi, to be credited to the Shraddhanand Memorial Fund. When remitting money, remitters are requested to send to the Bank a complete statement of the names and addresses of donors, and the amounts subscribed by each donor and also his instructions, if any. They are also requested to send a copy of such statements to the Secretary, Shraddhanand Memorial Fund, Delhi.

To ensure that all subscriptions are duly credited to the Fund, a formal receipt for the amount subscribed will be sent to the donors by the Secretary, Shraddhanand Memorial Fund. If such a receipt is not received by a donor within fifteen days of payment, it is requested that the donor should inform the Secretary of the fact.

We owe it to the memory of the revered Swamiji that the sum of ten lakhs for which the appeal has been issued by the Hindu Mahasabha, should be fully subscribed at the latest by the 30th of April next.

APPENDIX IV

WHOM KHADI STANDS FOR

'THE MAN WITH THE HOE'

Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Staid and stunned, a brother to the Ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back his brow,
Whose breath blew out the light within his brain?

* * *

Oh, masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
Is this the handiwork you give to God,
This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quenched?
How will you ever straighten up this shape,
Touch it again with immortality,
Give it the upward looking and the light:
Rebuild in it the music and the dream?

—*Edward Markham*

Young India, 31-3-1927

APPENDIX V

FROM THE PREFACE TO "BAPU'S LETTERS TO MIRA"

In order that the reader may have a clearer background, I will explain briefly the outline of events in my life which led me to Bapu. Having been brought up in an English country home, I was familiar with rural life, besides which there was, inherent in me from the beginning, a profound love of Nature. At the age of 15, I first heard the music of Beethoven. Forthwith my spirit within was awakened to a living sense of the Divine Power, and prayer to God became a reality. Through Beethoven's music I was led to Romain Rolland, and through Romain Rolland to Bapu. These were not just easy stages. On the contrary, turmoil, darkness, hope, despair—all had to be passed through before the pure Light of Truth broke in upon my troubled soul and led me to my destination.

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM BASIL MATHEWS

WORLD SERVICE TO 'THE FRIENDS OF BOYS' UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF THE WORLD'S COMMITTEE OF Y.M.C.A.

January 5, 1927

SIR,

To the boys of the world we addressed a general questionnaire in which we asked—"Who in your opinion is the greatest living man?" Trained educationists and leaders of youth in over fifty countries aided us in this world-wide inquiry into the mind of boys. The response of hundreds of boys from a large number of countries—Asiatic, European, American and African—showed that "they consider you the greatest man living".

We are publishing a magazine for leaders of boys—*The World's Youth*—which circulates in 59 countries. It would be of unmeasured significance to them and to the boys they serve, to have direct from yourself, through the medium of this journal, a personal message as to the general principle that has guided your life. We assure you that this is no mere journalistic stunt. We are making the request sincerely believing that your compliance will mean very much for the advancement of what we both hope for—a stronger, cleaner, more heroic youth throughout the world.

We are convinced that your intimate statement of 100 words or more will be a factor of profound influence in the lives of thousands of boys, and we will be glad to convey back to you responses we receive from them, in which we know you will be interested.

Yours faithfully,
BASIL MATHEWS

From a photostat: S.N. 12476

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad (Hindi): Ed. Kaka Kalelkar, Jamnalal Bajaj Trust, Wardha, 1953.

SABARMATI SANGRAHALAYA: Library and Records containing documents relating to Gandhiji's South African period and Indian period up to 1933; *vide* Vol. I, p. 349 (first edition) and p. 341 (second revised edition).

The Searchlight: English daily published from Patna.

Young India: English weekly edited by Gandhiji and published from Ahmedabad.

February 10 : At Jalgaon attended spinning demonstration by students; addressed women's meeting, visited pinjrapole and met members of Chaitanya Mandal. Addressed public meeting and meeting of untouchables.

February 11 : Left Jalgaon by car; reached Bhusaval.

February 12 : Spoke at Amalner.

February 13 : At Dhulia addressed six meetings.

February 16 : Spoke at Nasik.

February 18: At Ahmednagar visited Rashtriya Pathashala. Addressed mass meeting.

February 19: At Sholapur spoke in reply to municipal address. Visited the tribal Settlement and the Spinning and Weaving Mills.

February 20: Spoke at mass meeting.

February 21: Left Sholapur for Gulburga by train.

February 22: At Sharana Basappa Temple, Gulburga, addressed Hindus and Muslims.

February 25: In Sangli addressed students' meeting at Wellington College.

February 28: Spoke at Lanje.

March 1: In Ratnagiri spoke at women's meeting.

March 2: At Mahad.

March 3: In Sasavane spoke at Vaishya Vidyashram.

March 4: In Poona spoke at Reay Market. Addressed students about midnight.

March 6: At Akola attended Manilal-Sushila wedding.

March 7: Left Akola by train for Ahmedabad.

March 8-14: At Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad.

March 15: Spoke at Madhi, Mandvi village.

March 16: At Vedchhi addressed conference of hillmen.

March 17: In *Young India* article "No and Yes" replied to Saklatvala's open letter.

March 19: In Hardwar delivered convocation address at Gurukul Kangri.

March 20: Addressed National Educational Conference.

March 21: Left Hardwar for Bombay.

March 23: Spoke at Santa Cruz.

April 25: In letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta wrote that he would "not plunge into active work thoughtlessly or without medical advice".

April 26: In letter to R. B. Gregg said that living on sun-baked fruits and nuts without using fire would bring animal passions under conscious control.

May 2: Blood-pressure found to be normal.

May 8: In *Navajivan* article "Cow *v.* Buffalo or Cow-cum-Buffalo?" advised "experiments in dairying and tanning from the religious and national point of view in the cities".

May 10: In letter to Saklatvala said that labour in India was "still extremely unorganized".

May 11: In letter to Fulchand K. Shah asked him not to offer satyagraha without his permission.

May 12: In *Young India* in "Notes" under "Evils of Machine-milling" condemned Indians for being "too much obsessed by the glamour of the West".

May 19: In *Young India* article "Nagpur Satyagraha" denied that he ever gave consent for civil disobedience in Nagpur and warned everyone "not to use his name in connection with any movement without getting his permission in writing."

May 22: In *Navajivan* article "He Should Be Dismissed" said: "The path of non-violence is neither for the coward nor for the stupid. . . it is for those who are ever vigilant."

May 26: In *Young India* in "An Appeal to Indian Humanity" said: "If we want to become a self-respecting and independent nation. . . the honour of the least among our sisters must be as dear to us as that of our blood-sisters."

May 28: In letter to G. L. Nanda, described *Bhagavad Gita* as his "only dictionary of reference".

June 5: Came down from Nandi Hills. Spoke at Chikballapur. Reached Bangalore.

June 12: In letter to Satcowripati Ray said that social reforms were necessary as part of our struggle for freedom.

June 15: The debate on the Indian Bills was resumed in South African Union Assembly.

In letter to G. L. Nanda Gandhiji said that labour must "better its conditions independently" and negotiate with the mill-owners consistently with "dignity and self-respect".

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